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**EDITORIAL
BETRAYED BY OUR OWN**



Giani Zail Singh
President 1984

Manmohan Singh
Prime Minister 2011

Parkash Singh Badal
Punjab Chief Minister

This issue of the Sikh Bulletin narrates another horrible chapter of the Sikh Genocide offering at the feet of Goddess Indra Gandhi. PP 13-28 carry the unspeakable horror story of Sikh residents of village Hondh-Chillar, District Rewari, Haryana. On November 02, 1984, scores of hired hoodlums, from outside the neighborhood, and egged on by the Congress Party establishment of Haryana headed by its Chief Minister Bhajan Lal, drove on state supplied buses and trucks to the Sikh hamlet in broad daylight, armed with clubs, sharp weapons and kerosene. They butchered Sikh men, women and children, burning many of them alive. Sadly, in the life of the adult Sikhs this was the second nightmare, first was their flight in 1947 from what is now Pakistan. They were resettled in this hamlet that was once home to the Muslims who had to flee to Pakistan. It turns out that police report was made at that time but then suppressed and made to disappear.

A Sikh was President of India when these atrocities were committed and now even though the Prime Minister of the country is also a Sikh, there is no hope for justice. Even the most publicized killings of Sikhs in New Delhi have not brought justice to the Sikhs, inspite of numerous commissions of inquiry set up to find the truth and punish the perpetrators. His government and his political party, the perpetrators of that crime, have not even seen fit to apologize for that carnage. What can be expected of a man who has not even been able to persuade the French Government, for whose freedom 200,000 turbaned Sikhs died or got wounded during the two world

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wars, to accord the Sikhs living in France the right to wear turban. Manmohan Singh is so sensitive to be identified with Sikhs that, when soon after becoming the Prime Minister he visited Thailand to attend an International Conference, he declined to visit the first and historical Gurdwara in Bangkok. He also went on to recite 'deh shiva ver mohe...' in the Parliament to the delight of the BJP. One would expect that he should know who 'shiva' is in this case. More recently Amritinder Singh, coach of international golfer Jeev Milkha Singh, was asked to remove his turban twice within a few days when he entered and exited through the Milan airport and by the same officer. Another irony about Manmohan Singh is that he is keeping the seat of Prime Ministership warm for the son of the very man responsible for the India wide genocide of Sikhs as a revenge for his mother's assassination. Sikh leadership in Panjab, whether Akali or Congress, is equally corrupt. We wish Manpreet Singh Badal well but the rest of the Badal clan we wish the same fate as meted out to the Romanian dictator family, the Ceaușescus.

Hardev S. Shergill

[On December 25, 1989, Ceaușescus' helicopter, in which they were fleeing the country, was forced down. In a quick military trial the Ceaușescus were sentenced to death, among the charges, illegal gathering of wealth and genocide. They had their hands tied behind their backs and were led outside the building to be executed immediately. There was no shortage of volunteers. Badals are guilty of the same crimes, illegal gathering of wealth and genocide of Sikhi. You can watch Ceaușescus' last moments on:

[Nicolae Ceaușescu - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia](#) ED]

BANDA BAHADUR'S UNDERSTANDING AND INTERPRETATION OF THE CONCEPT OF SOVEREIGNTY

Gurtej Singh, Chandigarh

[I am before the public again after a brief interval. This was necessitated by several factors. I had gone to Thailand for about two weeks. Thereafter, I had to attend two important seminars at Punjabi University, Patiala. For one of them I was required to write a paper. The paper I wrote is presented below. I hope it will be of some use to those keen to know about Sikh polity and about Banda Singh Bahadur.]

1) Fragments clinging to fragments may have made it possible for Lucretius to identify objects, to "know and name them" but slicing history into neat portions and trying to understand it fragment by fragment is perhaps not the best method of doing so. The Guru himself

indicated that the effort of ten Nanaks has to be looked upon as inspired by unity of thought when he laid down the doctrine that all Nanaks in their ten human forms were to be regarded as one single Guru. The non-acceptance of the thesis is the single element that has marred understanding of the true import, purpose, direction and content of Sikh history. The tendency to interpret events in isolation, to consign them to carefully crafted niches, has marred the appreciation of the contribution of Banda and his companions.

2). On account of this, ever since his sudden appearance on the Punjab scene and his equally dramatic exit from the world, Banda Singh Bahadur has remained an enigmatic figure defying comprehension. To add to it, even the conventional sources of history have not been properly mined to yield information about him and his work in the six years of intense activity allotted to him by history. The total disorientation of modern historians regarding the ethos of the Sikh movement, has taken its own toll. This has rendered them incapable of drawing conclusions from the clear messages emanating from the period. The expressive symbolism and rich imagery, that has fortunately been passed down fully intact, has not been adequately interpreted. This includes very expressive legends on the coins and official seal of the period, graphic description of Banda's battles, new trends in the exercise of sovereign power, rather broad hints about hitherto unheard of power relationships in society and the palpable sympathy for the lowly and the abandoned sections as depicted in many contemporary documents that survive. Not the least is the spiritual inspiration of the movement that nudged everything rationally inexplicable into the realm of reality.

3). Difficulties and mental reservations that impeded the objective assessment of Banda and his times also deserve mention. Contemporary Muslim historians use language that indicates the total frustration and shock at the enormity of unfolding events. Despite the intense admiration for Banda, which they expressed in equally intense hatred, they aligned themselves with the Mughal state which they further identified closely with Islam and wrote from the perspective of rulers and their faith. Their influence has corrupted the vision of modern historians like Syad Muhammad Latif. Taking his cue from them, Latif, tried to weave the private purpose of demonising Banda with the

presentation of history. The contemporary Hindu historians are conspicuous by their absence. Those of the later period (except perhaps Ganesh Das Wadhwa) surrendered to the convenient dynastic ambitions of the Sikh rulers and the imperialistic demands of the British. The natural reluctance of patronage seekers to annoy people in authority for the sake of propagating the truth has not been pronounced in this part of the world. The Sikhs themselves had no use for the self-denying theory of polity propounded by the Guru and practiced by Banda. Rattan Singh Bhangu who alone could appreciate it, unfortunately betrays signs of succumbing to official propaganda unleashed by the state. To this he added a prejudice against Banda for his failure to establish a long lasting State. They chose the easy path of blaming him although the blame lay squarely at the door of those who deserted him at the crucial time. **It went unnoticed that the dissenting Sikh leaders had cast away the collective success of the Sikhs in exchange for dreams of personal fulfilment, hoping to pass off desertion as better strategy.** The Sikh historians were, clearly not attuned to making an objective assessment of Banda. For the Sikh potentates of the later period Banda was a revealing mirror and therefore an embarrassment.

4). **To believe that Banda came with just five arrows, five companions, only twenty-five soldiers and that the legacy of two and a half centuries did not travel with him to the Punjab from Nanded, is to completely go astray.** The teachings, the spiritual training and examples set by the Gurus had yielded a plentiful harvest of honourable, autonomous individuals profoundly ‘ignorant of the rules of slavish behaviour’¹ They had been organised into the close-knit, militarily trained Order of the Khalsa which had been charged with extending God’s domain beyond the self. To those who ignore the magnitude of Banda’s epic performance and its worldwide ramifications, it becomes a mere expression of revenge, an orgy of violence by a vicious character and the macabre play of forces starved for political prominence. To ignore the ameliorating philosophy that Banda and his companions came with is to fall straight into the lap of motivated Mughal news-writers and to be reduced to the level of biased, short-sighted historians like Latif.

5). **Banda’s supposed deviation from the path of the Guru, also appears to be a fall-out of the sustained propaganda of the Mughal state.** The strategy appears

to have been finalised by Aurangzeb who assigned a pacifist role to the earlier Gurus. He is already on record as having asked Guru Gobind Singh to adopt the pacifist ways of the elders of his faith, He asked Wazir Khan to remind the Guru to avoid the trappings of political power and to shun deviation from the path of “other recluses and his own ancestors.”² Banda was accused of having become the head of the ‘harmless sect’ of Nanakpanthis by ‘deception,’ of ‘collecting malcontents around him’ and of persuading them by ‘misrepresentation and deception to light the fires of discontent in Hindustan, the Punjab and the world.’ He was supposed to have ‘defiled the places of worship’ to have raised ‘the sword of oppression.’³ This official propaganda was fully or partially imbibed by later historians in varying degrees according to their persuasions. Latif finds Banda’s “policy (to be) directly opposed to Nanak and Govind Singh –.” He thereafter finds it safe to characterise him as a “wild beast -- a monster—(with) blood-thirsty propensities.”⁴ His conclusion is based on the perception that Banda’s revolution was merely a ‘Muslim-Sikh conflict.’⁵

6). H. R. Gupta’s bold attempt to project Banda’s struggle as a Hindu led, Hindu supported “nationalist movement” appears untenable.⁶ Ahmed Shah Batalvi understood that the Guru administered *amrit* to Banda before bringing him to join the Khalsa at his camp in Nanded.⁷ Banda’s ‘revolt’ was characterised as the ‘Khalsa revolt.’⁸ Fugitives, who represented to the emperor to implore intercession, identified Banda as a ‘Sikh of the Guru.’ Banda used the Sikh terminology in addressing strangers. To him everyone was a ‘Singh.’ He urged the Hindus and the rulers of the hills to merge with the Khalsa. There is strong contemporary evidence that Banda was a follower of the Udasi order ‘founded’ by Baba Sri Chand son of Guru Nanak. This would make him fully aware of the Sikh mission and tenets even before he met the Guru. He always invited his visitors to take the *pahul* and to join the Khalsa.⁹ Several persons received the Khalsa *pahul* from him. The three prominent persons who accepted his invitation were Dindar Khan son of Jalal Khan Rohilla a minor ruler, Mir Nasiruddin a news-writer and Chhajju a Jat from Panjwar. He himself presided over the religious ceremonies of initiation.¹⁰ Banda’s state papers bear ample evidence of their origin in the Sikh establishment. At Amritsar, Banda invited young men to embrace Sikhi, promising

remission of land revenue and other rewards. Thereupon the people of Majha joined the Khalsa.¹¹ Ganda Singh quotes a dated Punjabi manuscript to affirm that not only was Banda strictly following the instructions laid down in the *Guru Granth* but was also meticulously following the direction of Guru Gobind Singh.¹² This evidence is sufficient to characterise Banda's political undertaking as a revolution led by the Khalsa.

7). **Banda's struggle was not against the Muslims or Islam as he himself stated in one of his official pronouncements.**¹³ He had to overcome a grave provocation to make this declaration of intent. The pronouncement came within months of the general order of extermination issued against the Sikhs by the emperor.¹⁴ He was waging a war to empower the ordinary people. He aimed at establishing a state which was not faith specific. It belonged to all who lived within its territories. This makes him the head of a 'People's Republic.' The most important institution that sustained the medieval state was the army. He recruited his army from amongst the Sikhs as well as the Muslims.¹⁵ It possibly had a sprinkling of Hindus also though that cannot be readily ascertained as a fact. The 'low-caste' people who joined Banda were living on the fringes of Hindu society and had no love for it and readily became an integral part of the Society of the Khalsa by accepting the *pahul*.

8). The ideological basis as well as the sheer enormity of the political strife needs to be fully imbibed. It was noticed as early as 1723 by the author of the *Ibratnama* that the happenings had been of an extraordinary nature and had constituted a formidable event.¹⁶ Somewhat exaggerating the initial stages of the campaign, *Asrar-e-Samadi*, would have us believe that the Sikhs had defeated every noble of the empire.¹⁷ They had defeated the Governor of Sarhind, the Faujdar of Ambala (Latif, 278) as also the Governor of Jalandhar. Muhammad Qasim, a contemporary and an eye-witness, is aghast at the "exiling of persons of status." He finds the occurrences "strange, astonishing things that defy imagination."¹⁸ Latif quotes Iradat Khan, a contemporary, who appears to discern the deep ideological conflict that "determined to shake to very basis the true religion of Islam."¹⁹ The politically conscious Mughal subjects decided that the happenings merited immediate declaration of *jihad* against the Sikhs.²⁰ The Hindu subjects, not wanting to be left

behind in patriotic fervour, liberally financed the *jehadis*. Description of the 'holy warriors' is available. All kinds of people, "learned men, mystics, scholars and pious men" who perceived a threat to the "pure community and the luminous Muslim law" made a common cause with the Lahore administration, put together a "godly army—a divine army." For the same author, Banda was an "anarchist."²¹ Ostensibly, a handful of "badly armed peasants,"²² volunteers, without the means of fighting even a pack of dacoits, arrayed themselves against the most powerful empire of the times that had been ruling over them for eight centuries. The empire fielded, "Wazir Khan's artillery, Mughal cavalry and cohorts of volunteer Muslim *ghazis*" against them.²³ Even then the Sikh intervention did not prove to be a Quixotic venture, like charging at a windmill.

9). Banda and his companions appear to have been fully determined and amply equipped morally and intellectually to establish a new kind of a polity (a people's republic) to replace the 'unjust and oppressive' medieval Mughal state. They had carefully cultivated ideas and had fully worked out the proposition that they sought to implement. The coin, with profoundly meaningful inscription was struck immediately.²⁴ The wording of the official seal was finalised without delay. At the very outset, the monarchical tendencies were discouraged. Banda appointed administrative functionaries. The concept of more than one person jointly governing an area was initiated. All notions of heredity were done away with and symbols of royalty were abandoned. Banda claimed no status higher than that of a leader without a specific territory to govern directly – assuming almost the position of a constitutional head of modern times. His model was copied copiously by the Sardars and *misaldars* of the early *misal* period. They dispensed with kingship, became indifferent to territorial possessions and abandoned the hereditary principles. Express consent of the governed became necessary to claim dominion over a territory.²⁵ Ranjit Singh, popularly considered an absolute ruler, had to keep up appearances of abiding by Banda's ideal.²⁶ Leadership among Sardars went by merit and not by hereditary succession.²⁷

10). Objective of the Gurus is clear from their pronouncements, conduct and the nature of the institutions that they established. They sought to bring

about a total change in the human character, the environment and the mode of governance. Though India was the centre of their activity, their concerns transcended borders and ignored barriers of all kind. They aimed at so arranging the spiritual, social, economic, political and psychological environment of human habitats so as to bring about a tension free and peaceful society in which human beings lived in perfect harmony, enjoyed an honourable existence enabling them to make limitless spiritual progress. The ever increasing desire to take humankind on that road becomes more and more pronounced with every successor Guru. Banda gives priority to the mission stipulated by the Guru when he emphatically announces in one of the few documents still in existence: **‘I have brought into existence the idyllic age of Truth (satyug).’**²⁸ If this element is missed in the making of Banda and the original nature of polity he created is ignored, the historian is likely to end up without a proper frame of reference in which to place his life and achievements.

11). Integral to the understanding of Banda’s concept of sovereignty is also the interpretation of the emblems of authority used by him, Also relevant is the language of the state papers, the inscriptions on the official seal and the coins struck by him. These need to be understood in the context of the Sikh movement of which he was the most prominent political leader. It is not enough to attribute his style of exercising political authority to his being “unique, unpretentious and selfless” as has been done by one of our greatest historians.²⁹ The inscription on the official seal as reported to Bahadur Shah on July 6, 1710,³⁰ that is within about thirty-six days of the assumption of sovereign power, reads, **‘the manifest and the un-manifest glory of Guru Nanak (lies in insisting that) the True Lord Himself is the King in the spiritual world as also in the temporal.’** This sentiment finds ample support in the *bani* of *Guru Granth*.³¹ Banda is thereby repudiating the conventional theory of sovereignty and is promulgating a new doctrine whereby the sovereign power inheres in God and by derivation vests with the people. He follows up the pronouncement by abolishing monarchy. The Sikh political leaders of the *misl* period belonged to or at least were descendants in interest of those who had deserted Banda. Even then they had to tread cautiously in the matter of defying Banda’s political formulation. Later on Ranjit Singh had to wage a heavily veiled

ideological war of sorts to scuttle the theory and to pave the way for hereditary succession.

12). An attempt may be made to understand the legends on Banda’s coins and the official seal. One on the coin appears to state the general approach of the Khalsa Order, **‘the Sikhs assert that the central import of the doctrine of Nanak bears fruit in both the worlds. By the Grace of the True Master, victory belongs to Guru Gobind Singh, the King of Kings.’**³² The one on the seal is more specific and relates to the business of the government **‘Victory flows effortlessly to the concepts of power relationships and the management of resources, formulated by the ever victorious Guru, Nanak, Gobind Singh.’**³³

His letter to the Khalsa of Jaunpur may be translated as follows:³⁴

God is 1. (May you always) behold victory!³⁵

It is the order of the True Master that the Sarbat Khalsa of Jaunpur be saved by the Guru. For redeeming the (human) birth, contemplate upon the Guru and repeat his name. You are the Khalsa of the respected Akalpurakh (the Immortal Being). Wear five weapons on seeing this order and be immediately seen in the presence. Abide by the code of conduct of the Khalsa: do not consume any cannabis, tobacco, opium, poppy husk, alcohol or intoxicant. Do not eat fish or onions. Shun extra-marital affair and do not steal. I have provided for the ‘age of Truth’ to prevail. Maintain mutual affection. The Guru shall reach out to him who obeys my direction to conform to the Khalsa code of conduct. The date is the 12th of Poh, the 1st year. Lines: ten. [December 12, 1710 CE]

13). In the above letter and legends Banda is conveying that he is a supporter of a new revolutionary theory of polity and favours a complete change in the political, economic and social relationships. The legend on Banda’s seal of office implies: **‘triumph attends upon Guru Nanak’s and Gobind Singh’s formulations that generously dispense political power and resources (means of subsistence).’** This, he believes, is the import of the central doctrine of the faith of the Guru grounded in the Will of the Immortal Being. The basic postulates impinging upon the primary human concerns are to be translated into workable principles benefiting the entire humankind

under the guidance of the strictly disciplined and fully armed (and therefore, sovereign) Khalsa. This, he claims, is capable of transforming all kinds of human relations that are henceforth to be based on complete tolerance and mutual understanding. Such a world, he feels, is so radically different from the one in existence that it can be described as the 'age of Truth' or a revolutionary era wherein human affairs are regulated strictly according to Truth (justice) leading to the elimination of conflict. He believes that implementing these postulates is the purpose of life, the very goal of spiritual striving. In the other letter to the congregation of Bhai Rupa, he specifically promises 'everlasting felicity' (*nihal hovega*) to those who would give armed support to the sovereignty of the common people initiated by him.

14). At the earliest the Sikh administration dismissed the oppressive revenue collectors, the very face of the Mughals to the people. They overturned the Zamindari system,³⁶ the cornerstone of the Mughal administration. It changed the mode of revenue collection, making it more humane. This fact alone continued to draw a large number of adherents to the society of the Khalsa that led the Sikh movement until it permanently overthrew the Mughal state at the end of the 18th century.

15). At the centre of Banda's scheme of governance were the ordinary people whose express consent in respect to their governors became necessary for the first time in history. Besides drawing high officials from amongst them, the administration was required to integrate their concerns with the philosophy of governance and the policy of the state. Political and administrative power was used to elevate the humble and to empower the lowest amongst the low. Since it was the people's government, persons of humble origins were appointed to prestigious posts neglecting the aristocratic and the supposedly high born individuals.³⁷ Consequently came about a revolutionary change in the power relationship, thus earning for the Sikh people the epithet of "**topsy-turvy sect**" from Warid writing in 1734.³⁸ The basic principles of polity then propagated remained in vogue until the very end of Ranjit Singh's rule.

16). Far reaching reforms did not remain confined to politics and administration only. A complete change was brought about in the social relations. Centuries old prejudices were eliminated and religious injunctions

emanating in the ancient scriptures were rendered inoperative.³⁹ Gupta projects Banda as a "great reformer," who "broke down the barriers of caste."⁴⁰

17). All accounts agree that Banda and his companions exhibited extreme bravery in the grossly unequal battles they fought.⁴¹ They without doubt believed that they were a people charged by their Guru with bringing the fire of liberty, the warmth of human dignity and the supreme comfort of honourable existence to the people of the world. After their Guru, they were the first promoters of self-rule. They took up the serious business with missionary zeal and on expectation of the ultimate reward: that of supreme spiritual satisfaction (achieving the state of '*nihal*' or eternal bliss).

18). A glimpse of the captured Sikh soldiers has been afforded to us by history. Their demeanour, their morale under extreme stress and in the face of certain death betrays the mettle of highly spiritualised voluntary soldiers leading a liberation struggle. It sees them mocking their captors and executioners.⁴² They stood by their convictions to the end and their pride in the loftiness of their cause was not diminished.⁴³ **A foreign Embassy present in Delhi found it "remarkable" that the Sikhs underwent their fate with equanimity and that none apostatised from their religion.**⁴⁴ "Before execution an offer was made to spare their lives if they could become Musalman. None volunteered to do so."⁴⁵ A newly married young man, the only son of a widow was inspired to adopt the Sikh way on seeing the suffering of the captives. He was pardoned on the intercession of his mother and wife who claimed that he was not a Sikh. He declined to avail the reprieve.⁴⁶ Whosoever he was, this young man appears to have had a better understanding of the Sikh faith and the purpose of Banda. His sacrifice was symbolic. There is little doubt that he wished his example to find many takers. Even Latif feels compelled to acknowledge the fortitude of Banda and his companions in extremely trying circumstances.⁴⁷ Such loftiness of spirit is not the equipment of a people motivated by mundane considerations. The reaction betrays a people more divinely inspired than highly motivated in the mundane sense. They claimed to be God's army and supported their claim with their conduct.

Assessment of Banda's role, contribution and importance in history.

19). The high minded Banda was one of the noblest idealists thrown up by the Sikh movement in the post-Guru period. His life is but a philosophical treatise that the Guru 'wrote' to preserve his vision of ideal human society of the future thereby recording the contribution of the Sikh movement to the slowly emerging new world civilisation of the Guru's conception. **His emphasis on making the people's concern the basis of political action, his insistence on drawing no distinction between citizens on the basis of religion, rank or caste, his stress on the importance of the individual and above all his successful attempt at organising the world's first people's party for political action, of rooting it in non-denominational popular ideology and of accepting it as the true essence of spiritual striving, is remarkable by any standards of any age.** He is the greatest person of modern times; in fact, his career bids good-bye to the dark ages and ushers in the modern times. If a Mozart of the future ever composes a symphony depicting his career, it will have the most elevating effect on the human spirit. He must be regarded as a remarkable man who could stand shoulder to shoulder with the noblest of any culture of any region of any age. In their martyrdom which they courted so enthusiastically, Banda and his companions immortalised themselves, not only as the champions of people's causes but also placed themselves amongst the most pure minded of martyrs. **Together they make the most awesome seven hundred that the world has ever seen and constitute a befitting tribute to their Guru. They did not ride "into the valley of death" mindlessly and in pursuance of an erroneous mortal command but consciously chose to fulfil a spiritual purpose.**

To some⁴⁸ believers in the largely Judeo-Christian concept of millennialism, which also finds reflection in Islamic thought, Banda proposed a revolutionary solution to all the spiritual, personal, social and political predicaments of humankind. Muslim chroniclers of Banda are also apparently overwhelmed by the salvatory content of his assignment. They unwittingly cast him into the role of a Mahdi. The spontaneity, the egalitarian character, the total revolution it brought about in power relations, the firm grounding in spiritualism and the intense desire to establish an idyllic socio-political order dreamt of by some of the greatest benefactors of humankind, all combine to characterise Banda's effort as an expression of an aspect of "progressive millennialism."

1. *Asrar-e-Samadi*, (tr.) Janak Singh, Punjabi University Patiala, 1977, p. 13.
2. J. S. Grewal and Irfan Habib, *Sikh History from Persian Sources*, Tulika, New Delhi, 2001, p. 113.
3. *Asrar-e-Samadi*, Op. Cit., p. 7.
4. Syad Muhammad Latif, *History of the Punjab*, (1889), (Reprint) Sang-e-Meel Publication, Lahore, 1997, p. 280.
5. Latif, *Ibid.*, p. 279.
6. Hari Ram Gupta's attempt to pass off hearsay as evidence does not appear to work. Such is the intensity of his nationalistic fervour that he brushes aside the need to cite a source for this branch of 'evidence,' thereby risking his own reputation as a historian. Against ample available evidence he pits his bare assertion that Banda did not receive *pahul*. He represents even Guru Gobind Singh, who pulled him out of complete obscurity to the centre stage of history, of conspiring against Banda to prevent his becoming popular among the Sikhs. In his opinion, Tara Bai inspired him at least as much as the Guru. For him Malerkotla was spared from ravage, not by the Guru's blessing, but on the intervention of one Kishan Das Bania a fictitious character. Gupta even assigns a language (Hindvi) to Banda that supposedly charmed the Hindus into supporting him. *History of the Sikhs*, vol.ii, (1978), Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., Delhi.1992, pp. 8, 4, 7 and 3. He exaggerates the welcome that Banda received in the 'Haryana' region, whereas it is known; "it was not surprising that in some areas the *zamindars* apparently Jats, who had supported Banda were unable to accept *pahul*, turned against the Sikhs. Towards the south-east of Sirhind, in the plains of Ambala, Thanesar and Karnal, Banda's success was transient. In 1712 only seventeen persons of the entire non-Muslim population of Thanesar could be identified as Sikhs. Fourteen of them were willing to become Muslims to avoid torture and death." Muzafar Alam, *The Crisis of Empire in Mughal North India*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1997, p. 154; Rattan Singh Bhangu goes to the extent of saying that the Hindu recipients of Banda's military favours in the vicinity of Delhi invited and joined the Mughal *faujdar* of Kaithal in curbing Banda's insurgency. (See, *Sri Gur Panth Parkash*, Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, Amritsar, 1984, p. 132; The Hindus (apparently the Khatri and other trading communities) of Lahore financed the voluntary effort of the Saiyids to fight against the Sikhs. They joined hands with the Muslims in according a welcome to such Mughal forces as could score victories over the Sikhs. Muzafar Alam, *The Crisis of Empire in Mughal*

- North India, p. 152..
7. *Tarikh-e-Punjab*, (tr.) Gurbaksh Singh, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1969, p. 30.
 8. *Sikh History from Persian Sources, Op. Cit.*, p. 19.
 9. Ganda Singh, "The Punjab News," *The Punjab Past and Present*, Punjabi University, Patiala, October 1970, p. 241 citing Ruqqa-i-Amin-ud-Daulah, of June 1710; The following two statements about him unmistakably point to Banda being an Udasi mendicant, 'his mode of worship otherwise conforms to the doctrine of Guru Nanak' and also, 'his seat rivalled the royal throne in opulence' see, Nathmal Dhadi, *Amarnamah*, (tr.) Gurtej Singh, *Chakravayuh*, Institute of Sikh Studies, Chandigarh, 2000, p. 10.
 10. Batalvi, *Op. Cit.* p.39 states that he personally administered *amrit* to Chajja Singh who later became the head of the Bhangi misal.
 11. *History of the Sikhs*, vol. ii, *Op. Cit.*, p. 15 quoting Gian Singh and Yar Muhammad, *Dastur-ul-Insha* as quoted by Karam Singh.
 12. Ganda Singh quotes a Punjabi MS *Pothi* (dated 1779 CE, p. 292a.) According to it Banda says, "best worship for a king is to be just, is written in the Holy *Granth*. Those who do not administer justice are cast into hell. – Thus spoke to me the Great Man [Guru Gobind Singh]. If you call yourselves the Sikhs of the Great Man, do not practise sin, *adharma* and injustice. Raise up true Sikhs and smite those who do un-Sikh like acts. Bear the saying of the Great Man in your hearts," Ganda Singh, *Life of Banda Singh Bahadur*, (Reprint), Punjabi University, Patiala, p. 168. An echo of these instructions imparted to Banda can also be heard in Kesar Singh Chibbar, *Bansawalinama Dasan Patshahian ka*, (ed.) Rattan Singh Jaggi, and reproduced in *Parakh*, vol. ii, Panjab University, Chandigarh, 1972, see p. 174. Ganeshdas also sees "intimate connection between the activity of Guru Gobind Singh and Banda and the Sikh struggle for independence." J. S. Grewal, "Ganesh Das on Sikh Polity" *From Guru Nanak to Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, Guru Nanak University, Amritsar, 1972, p. 103.
 13. Ganda Singh, "The Punjab News," *The Punjab Past and Present*, vol. iv, Punjabi University, Patiala, October 1970, p. 228.
 14. *Ibid.*, p. 227.
 15. He is reported to have recruited 5, 000, Muslims in his army in April 1711. See Akhbar-i-Darbar-e-Mualla, (Jaipur) report dated April 28, 1711, quoted by Ganda Singh in *A Short History of the Sikhs*, 1950, pp. 104-05.
 16. It is acknowledged that his revolt, being grounded in a distinct political ideology, was the very first one of its kind. Asrar-e-Samadi, *Loc. Cit.*, p. 7; see also, Ganda Singh, *Banda Singh Bahadur*, Khalsa College, Amritsar, 1935, p. 256.
 17. Asrar-e-Samadi, pp. 7-8; Latif, depending upon contemporary records states, that "there was no nobleman daring enough to march from Delhi against them:" p. 277.
 18. *Ibratnama*, *Sikh History from Persian Sources*, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 111.
 19. Latif, writes, "the course of the decay of the imperial authority was largely determined by the nature of the Sikh movement which challenged the very basis of the Mughal power structure and had its own concepts of the ruler and rulership." *History of the Punjab*, p. 276; Muzafar Alam, *The Crisis of Empire in Mughal North India*, p. 134.
 20. Irvine, *Later Mughals*, Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, New Delhi, 1971, p. 105.
 21. *Sikh History from Persian Sources, Op. Cit.*, pp. 118-119; p. 123.
 22. John F. Richards, *The Mughal Empire*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, Fourth Reprint of the First Asian Edition, 1998, p. 257.
 23. *Ibid.*, p. 257.
 24. Irvine's doubt about Banda's poetical accomplishments is based upon an inept translation of the legends on his coins. See *Later Mughals*, *Op. Cit.*, p. 110.
 25. *Tarikh-e-Punjab*, (tr.) Gurbaksh Singh, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1969, p. 24; Both Bhangu and Ahmed Shah Batalvi, agree that the governed people had an important say in who would rule over them.
 26. The more the matter is probed, the more it reveals that every notion associated with hereditary kingship was deliberately thrown overboard. Ahmed Shah Batalvi, mentions the similar example of Nawab Kapur Singh who was a supreme leader but had no territory under his own governance, p. 45. There were territories that belonged to no one in particular but collectively to all. Bhangu mentions the Malwa country in that context. (Both Bhangu and) Batalvi, p. 38 point out Amritsar as another such area. In imitation of Banda's arrangement, there were areas that were ruled jointly by several Sardars. For instance Lahore was ruled jointly by three Sardars, p. 37. Kanheyias and Ramgarhias jointly ruled territories for many years. Multan was ruled jointly by Sardar Jhanda Singh Bhangi and his misaldar Lehna Singh. After its conquest, Kasur was divided into four parts; two went to the Bhangis, and one each to Ramgarhiyas and Kanheyias p. 55. Ranjit Singh "refrained from setting up institutions which might appear monarchical. In the first public Darbar held for the

- purpose of *raj tilak* in 1802, Ranjit Singh declared that his government will be styled ‘Sarkar Khalsa’ meaning the government of his people collectively.” See V. S. Suri, “General Preface” to Sohan Lal Suri’s, *Umdat-ut-Tawarikh, Punjab Itihas Prakshan*, Chandigarh, 1972, p. xvii.
27. Batalvi, Op. Cit., p. 22.
 28. For ‘*Satyug*’ see Kahan Singh, *Mahankosh*, Bhasha Vibhag, Patiala, 1974, pp.146 and 1009; it appears to be in order to translate it into ‘God’s Kingdom’ as Truth is a synonym for God in the Sikh scripture.
 29. See, Ganda Singh, *The Punjab Past and Present*, Op. Cit., p. 229.
 30. *Ibid.*, p. 230.
 31. *kouoo har samaan nahi raja, eh bhoopati divas char ke jhoothe karat diwaaja.*
 32. The translation is based on Kapur Singh, *Parasaraprasna*, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 1988, p. 233.
 33. The terminology ‘Degh Tegh’ appears to have been in common use at Banda’s time. It was perhaps used to connote concepts governing the power relations in a polity and the distribution of resources. A contemporary Persian work, *Asrar-i-Samadi*, p. 9, affirms that these are ‘twin’ concepts and have been in vogue from ‘time immemorial.’ The context in which the author uses it makes it further clear that these are related to the function of the state. This translation has been attempted in that light.
 34. For photocopy of the original see Ganda Singh, *Hukamnameh*, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1967, p. 194.
 35. The term *fateh darshan* appears to have been better understood by Irvine, *Later Mughals*, p. 110. It has to be read as the desire of a general in the field to hope and pray that his associates are always victorious in the battles they undertake.
 36. Ganda Singh, *Banda Singh Bahadur*, pp. 85-86; “To the Sikhs the Mughal state was the source of all tyranny, since the state not only had the largest share in the social surplus but it also legitimised the and sustained the existing power structure in the locality.” Muzafar Alam, *The Crisis of Empire in Mughal North India*, Op. Cit., p. 134.
 37. “In all the *parganas* occupied by the Sikhs, the reversal of previous customs was striking and complete. A low scavenger or leather-dresser, the lowest of the low in Indian estimation had only to leave home and join the Guru, when in a short space of time he would return to his birth-place as its ruler, with his orders of appointment in his hand. As soon as he set foot within the boundaries, the well-born and wealthy went out to greet him and to escort him home. Arrived there they stood before him with joined palms, awaiting his orders.” William Irvine, *Later Mughals*, Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, New Delhi, 1971, pp. 98-99.
 38. See, *Sikh History from Persian Sources*. Pp. 161-162.
 39. “Whoever became enrolled among his Sikhs (was) of one body --- and (took) their meals together so that the distinction in honour between the lowly and the well-born was entirely removed---. A sweeper of spittle sat with a raja of great status and they felt no hostility to each other. Banda thus initiated numerous innovations and strange practices and put them into effect---.” Muhammad Shafi Warid, Mirat-i Waridat, *Sikh History from Persian Sources*, Op. Cit., p. 161.
 40. “Banda was a great reformer. He broke down the barriers of caste, creed and religion. He appointed sweepers and cobblers as big officers before whom high caste Hindus, Brahmins and Kshatriyas stood with folded hands awaiting their orders.” Hari Ram Gupta, *History of the Sikhs*, vol. ii, (1978), Op. Cit., p. 37.
 41. *Asrar-e-Samadi*, p. 8; *Ibratnama, Sikh History from Persian Sources*, Op. Cit., p. 124; Gupta quotes several statements of the contemporary historian, Khafi Khan to the same effect: one such is, “the Sikhs in their *faqir* dress struck terror into the royal troops. The number of the dead and the dying of the Imperialists was so large that, for a time, it seemed they were losing ground.” Another relevant one is, (that during the siege of Lohgarh 1711) “they over and over and over again -- showed the greatest boldness and daring and made nocturnal attacks on the Imperial forces – the enemy exhibited great courage and daring.” *History of the Sikhs*, Op. Cit., vol. ii, p. 18 and p. 24; Quoting Muhammad Qasim who fought against the Sikhs, Gupta writes, “the brave and the daring deeds of the infernal Sikhs were wonderful,” p. 29.
 42. They “drowned the mockery by singing in chorus, hymns from the holy Granth.” C. R. Wilsom, *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*, 96-98, quoted by H. R. Gupta in his *History of the Sikhs*, Op. Cit., vol. ii, p. 30.
 43. Mirza Muhammad, author of the *Ibratnama*, says, the Sikh “prisoners in this condition insisted on standing fast by their villainy. There was no sign of humility and submission on their faces. Rather most of them ---kept singing and reciting melodious verses. - --They gave immediate and manly retorts” p.140. “.Let them kill us. We do not fear death. Had we feared it, how could we have fought so many battles with you? We have fallen into your hands because of hunger and lack of

provisions; otherwise, you would have come to know of our bravery far more than has been witnessed till now.” *Sikh History from Persian Sources*, 141.

44. An Embassy of the East India Company that had witnessed the “Arrest and Massacre of the Sikhs at Delhi” reported to Calcutta on March 10, 1716, “— there are 100 each day beheaded. It is not a little remarkable with what remarkable patience they undergo their fate, and to the last it has not been found that one apostatised from their new formed Religion.” H. R. Gupta, pp. 34-35, quoting *Early Records of British India*; and *Maasir-ul- Umara*.
45. Hari Ram Gupta, Op. Cit., p. 32.
46. “I do not know whose mother she is and from where she has brought this bride. – My companions have passed off. Now my time is slipping out of my hands, this delay is causing me much trouble.” Khafi Khan, in *Sikh History from Persian Sources*, pp. 158-159.
47. “They met their doom with the utmost indifference; nay, they even clamoured for priority of martyrdom.” Syad Muhammad Latif, *History of the Punjab*, p. 280.
48. For instance, John F. Richards, *The Mughal Empire*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, (Fourth Reprint of the first South Asian Edition) 1998.256-8; see also John Keay, *India A History*, Perennial, London 2004, pp. 361, 364. (I am indebted to my colleague Harshinder Singh for the references pertaining to millennialism. - Author)

ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਇਕ ਚਮਤਕਾਰ ਸੀ: ਡਾ ਦਿਲਗੀਰ ਨੇ ਆਕਸਫੋਰਡ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਰਧਾਂਜਲੀ ਭੇਟ ਕੀਤੀ

ਆਕਸਫੋਰਡ - ਬੀਤੇ ਦਿਨ ਏਥੇ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਭਾ ਆਕਸਫੋਰਡ ਵਿਚ ਹਏ ਦੀਵਾਨ ਵਿਚ ਸਿੱਖ ਪੰਥ ਦੇ ਮਹਾਨ ਜਰਨੈਲ ਬਾਬਾ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਨੂੰ ਭਰਪੂਰ ਸ਼ਰਧਾਂਜਲੀਆਂ ਭੇਟ ਕੀਤੀਆਂ ਗਈਆਂ। ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਅਤੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਨੰਗਲ ਦੀ ਗੜ੍ਹੀ ਵਿਚ ਗ੍ਰਿਫ਼ਤਾਰ ਕੀਤੇ ਗਏ ਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਨੂੰ 27 ਫ਼ਰਵਰੀ 1716 ਦੇ ਦਿਨ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਪਹੁੰਚਾਇਆ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ ਤੇ 5 ਮਾਰਚ ਤੋਂ ਇਕ-ਇਕ ਸੌ ਨੂੰ ਰੋਜ਼ ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸ਼ਰਧਾਂਜਲੀ ਦੇਣ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕਾਰ ਡਾਕਟਰ ਹਰਜਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਿਲਗੀਰ ਨੈਸ਼ਨਲ ਪਰੋਫੈਸਰ ਆਫ ਸਿੱਖ ਹਿਸਟਰੀ ਉਚੇਚੇ ਤੌਰ ‘ਤੇ ਆਕਸਫੋਰਡ ਪੁੱਜੇ ਹੋਏ ਸਨ; ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਬਾਬਾ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਇਕ ਚਮਤਕਾਰ ਸੀ ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਮੁਲਕ ਦੀ ਆਜ਼ਾਦੀ ਦੀ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਜੰਗ ਜਿੱਤੀ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਸੱਤ ਸੌ ਸਾਲ ਮਗਰੋਂ

ਕਿਸੇ ਖਿੱਤੇ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਦੇਸ਼ੀ ਹਕੂਮਤ ਨੂੰ ਖ਼ਤਮ ਕੀਤਾ ਸੀ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਹ ਪਹਿਲਾ ਬਾਦਸ਼ਾਹ ਸੀ ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਨਾਂ ‘ਤੇ ਸਿੱਕਾ ਜਾਰੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤਾ ਤੇ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦੇ ਨਾਂ ‘ਤੇ ਜਾਰੀ ਕੀਤਾ ਸੀ; ਉਹ ਪਹਿਲਾ ਅਸਲ ਰਾਜਾ ਸੀ ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਕਾਸ਼ਤਕਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਜ਼ਮੀਨ ਦਾ ਹਾਕਮ ਬਣਾਇਆ ਸੀ; ਉਸ ਮਹਾਨ ਜਰਨੈਲ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਹੀਦੀ ਵੀ ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਲਾਸ਼ਾਨੀ ਸੀ। ਡਾ ਦਿਲਗੀਰ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਮਹਾਰਾਜਾ ਰਣਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਦੇ ਮੁਕਾਬਲੇ ਵਿਚ ਬੌਣਾ ਰਾਜਾ ਸੀ; ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਾ ਰਾਜ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਅਸੂਲਾਂ ਮੁਤਾਬਿਕ ਸੀ ਜਦ ਕਿ ਰਣਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਖ਼ਾਨਦਾਨੀ ਹਕੂਮਤ ਕਾਇਮ ਕੀਤੀ ਸੀ ਜਿਸ ਨੂੰ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਪੈਦਾ ਕੀਤੇ ਚਾਪਲੂਸ ਡੋਗਰਿਆਂ ਤੇ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣਾਂ ਨੇ ਗ਼ਦਾਰੀ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਖ਼ਤਮ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਸਮਾਗਮ ਮਗਰੋਂ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਅਤੇ ਮੁਖ ਗ੍ਰੰਥੀ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਡਾ ਦਿਲਗੀਰ ਨੂੰ ਸਿਰੋਪਾਓਂ ਬਖ਼ਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ। ਇਸ ਮੌਕੇ ਤੇ ਟਾਈਗਰ ਜਥਾ ਦੇ ਆਗੂ ਪ੍ਰਭਦੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ, ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਦੇ ਸਾਬਕਾ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਸ ਪਰਗਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਬਹੁਤ ਪਤਵੰਤੇ ਵੀ ਹਾਜ਼ਰ ਸਨ।

SAME SEX UNIONS

I.J. Singh

(In recent weeks, Sikh sites on the Internet have fostered an energetic discussion on same sex unions. I enter this debate with a great deal of trepidation. The conversation is necessary, hence this essay written a few years ago.)

On July 19, 2005, Canada became the fourth nation to fully legalize same sex marriages. During the stormy national debate that preceded it, Navdeep Singh Bains, a young Canadian Sikh lawmaker, garnered significant notoriety and considerable abuse from his fellow Sikhs for supporting the legislation. The highest seat of Sikh temporal authority, the *Akaal Takht* in Amritsar, India, also joined the fray; its *jathedas* quickly censured the Canadian law and exhorted Sikhs to reject it. Canadian *gurdwaras* immediately weighed in with statements condemning Canada’s legalization of same sex unions.

Sooner or later, this Pandora’s box had to be opened. The question of “gay marriages” will neither go away, nor should it. The Netherlands, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Portugal, Denmark and, most recently, South Africa have taken the bold step of embracing and legitimizing same sex unions after considerable soul searching. Others, like the United States, seem poised at the brink but find the question terrifying; the issue remains mired in interpretation of Christian doctrine by some, and in state versus federal rights by others. For instance, voters in Maine plan a

referendum that will decide, for the third time, whether to add sexual orientation to the state's human rights act that already prohibits discrimination based on sex, race, color, marital status, religion, ancestry or national origin.

Very much aware of the minefield I am stepping into, what I aim to do is not to propound a view written in stone, but to explore the issue from a Sikh humanitarian perspective – in other words, to foster a debate. Judgments and decisions will evolve, but that time is not now and not yet. It is time to explore, to debate and discuss. What is the Sikh position to be?

We like to think of love and marriage resulting in family to be as indivisible as horse and carriage. But the institution of marriage and family, like the horse and carriage, is in constant flux, evolving and changing dramatically over time.

Marriage and family was at one time a politically and socially mandated economic institution, protecting the rights of men, women and their children while delineating the duties of each. It was necessary for families to have children if for no other reason than to increase the labor pool. In support of this contention, I offer the fact that, in the upper classes, a man was expected to acquire a second wife if no children resulted from the first marriage; in Europe, the poorer classes and peasants would not marry until a premarital pregnancy provided proof of fertility.

The question of same sex marriages was moot, although same sex couplings have existed probably as long as humans have, and even longer in the animal kingdom. Although ancient Greeks received attention for bisexual and homosexual conduct, I doubt that other cultures were free of it. For instance, I point to the eunuch culture that has existed in Indian society for ages. Until very recently, in most societies including Indian, gays were effectively closeted and never publicly acknowledged.

But socioeconomic realities have changed, spurred largely by the industrial revolution and advances in reproductive technology. Now having a child is a choice, as is the decision to marry or to continue with a marriage; these are not matters dictated by economic or societal imperatives. Marriages are now increasingly driven by love or become mergers dictated

by other considerations, where the roles of the individuals are negotiable and flexible.

These societal changes open the door to the argument that gay and lesbian couples can participate in modern society as a family unit just as well as heterosexual couples. It follows, then, that to deny them such opportunity is to abridge their human dignity and their rights of citizenship.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to deny that gay citizens have equal rights in a just and free society. There is mounting biological evidence of a propensity for gay behavior, if not of a gay gene. I don't know if homosexual behavior is entirely or only partially driven by differences in DNA or if being gay is the sin that some Bible-thumpers would have us believe, but to deny gays any of their basic human rights would certainly be sinful.

A marriage is a civil union when a court or some such legally controlling authority performs it. Such an act speaks of a legally binding, contractual obligation that is needed for protection of the individual participants as well as of the society. I could, therefore, argue that there is no basis for denying gays and lesbians such civil licenses, even though, traditionally, marriages have been defined as only between heterosexual partners. Even common-law marriages are legal recognition of only heterosexual unions.

Sikh tradition and teaching speaks of human dignity that is inviolate and of relationships that are not exploitive or manipulative. I believe my position to allow same sex unions is consistent with this.

The next question is whether Sikhism would allow same sex marriages to be performed within a gurdwara by the same rites (*Anand Kaaraj*) as heterosexual marriages. And here we are in absolutely uncharted territory.

Remember that in the four *lavan* of Anand Kaaraj, there is no mention that the hymns are directed to a heterosexual couple; in fact, these hymns are metaphors for the development of the relationship between the human and the divine.

***Guru Granth* and Sikh teachings do not offer us a**

slate of unambiguous do's and don'ts; Sikhism does not micromanage our life. What it does offer us is an ethical framework of universal values within which to negotiate our ethical dilemmas.

For most people, marriage remains a sacrament that must be solemnized in sanctified space, where the presence of the unifying higher power of God can be felt. Even if they visit their places of worship no more than twice in their lifetimes, most people absolutely want the imprimatur of their religion before they feel decently married. Remember that religions provided the earliest organized structure for human societies with codes of conduct for their adherents that antedate civil societies.

Most religions have categorized a vast array of sins of omission and commission that place those followers who commit them outside the realm of those accepted to be in grace. Until they atone for their departure from the path, such people may have some privileges of institutional religion withheld from them, and they may be barred from participation in certain rites. For example, a divorced Roman Catholic may not easily receive Communion or be remarried in the Catholic Church.

Since a family – consisting of the mother, father and children, if any – forms the nucleus and the smallest functioning unit of society, most religions have sanctified this unit at the core of their teaching. In the view of most religions, then, gay and lesbian couples do not fit the definition of an acceptable unit of society. Even though they look to a universal loving creator, religions have to be lived here on earth. Most religions thus have difficulty sanctifying or accepting the union of same sex couples.

The question of same sex unions has only recently surfaced in Sikh society, not because gay Sikhs do not exist, but probably because in the Indian Sikh culture they remain closeted and do not occupy public space or public consciousness. I have come across one article (in Punjabi) by Gurbaksh Singh Kala Afghana on this issue; with a plethora of suggestive and indirect citations from *gurbani*, he rejects the idea of same sex unions. **One recent commentary in English by two Canadian Sikh lawyers, T. Sher Singh and Ramandeep Kaur Grewal, argues that for Punjab-based Sikh religious leaders to venture authoritative**

Sikh opinions on the Canadian legal debate was inappropriate as well as unnecessarily intrusive to the internal affairs of Canadian society.

In its scripture or its tradition, Sikh teaching appears to say nothing at all about same sex couples, but it does speak at length of core ethics wherein the dignity and rights of every human are sacred; where compassion and fairness govern human conduct. **It follows, then, that the rights of those who follow a gay lifestyle should be equally acknowledged and never abridged.**

Should homosexual Sikhs be discriminated against? I would say no, neither in the gurdwara nor outside of it. **Judge not others, the Gurus would say, but make your own life sublime.** This would mean judge not those who follow a different beat. I would think, therefore, that Sikhism would be tolerant and nondiscriminatory. By this logic, there would be no reason to ban a gay Sikh from any activity in the gurdwara in any capacity, from the managerial to the preparing and serving of the *parshaad* or *langar*, and even in the reading from Guru Granth or in leading the congregational prayer (*ardaas*). Some might be uncomfortable with my position here because many of these activities seem to cast the gay person as a role model for the community, but I mention them so as to spur discussion and debate.

It seems to me that homosexuality should be accepted and tolerated, but not necessarily held as a laudatory model lifestyle. If we recognize that some people are different (biologically or behaviorally), we can then accept their difference. And in practice Sikhism, I believe, has been quite tolerant, for one rarely hears of homosexuality and never of any discrimination. But then, this may be the natural result of an Indian culture where sexual intimacies are never publicly acknowledged.

On the other hand, much of Sikh teaching is couched in metaphors from family life. Even the adoration of God is explored in terms of the closest relationship that humans can comprehend – that between a man and a woman. The heterosexual relationship is defined as sacred in Sikhism; an honest family life is described as the first duty – the primary religion of humans. This must be kept in mind while we debate same sex unions.

From the perspective of nature, same sex unions clearly are at best sterile, nonproductive ones. A heterosexual union, on the other hand, holds the promise of being naturally productive. Same sex unions, some would argue, go against the biological laws of nature and are, therefore, against the laws of God; and laws of God cannot be denied.

Let's apply Kant's categorical imperative here: If everyone were to do what I recommend, would the world be a better place? If everyone were gay, the world would surely end because the gay union cannot be biologically fertile. Sex is meant to be a creative reproductive force. This reasoning lies at the core of religious rejection of same sex unions.

Yes, I know that modern reproductive technology can surmount such limitations, and also that not all heterosexual unions produce successful parents or children who contribute to society. Does this call for religions to withhold their approval of same sex unions? It is this that surely puts us in a pickle.

It seems to me that institutional religions must preach, as in fact they do, kindness, compassion and equal acceptance of all people regardless of their lifestyle or sexual orientation. But each religion must also be able to withhold its imprimatur from a certain way of life in its institutional framework.

Since religions have the right to determine if certain sacraments are to be denied to a follower judged as not being in a state of grace, a denial of the right to a religious wedding, it seems to me, is not a human-rights issue. It is matter to be decided by the adherents of a religion according to their traditions and teachings. A denial of recognition of same sex unions within a religious practice would, I believe, be outside the jurisdiction of the civil judicial process. In other words, a religion may deny a religious wedding ceremony for same sex couples in a church or a gurdwara while at the same time insisting on equal rights for them in society.

The Sikh code of conduct (*Rehat Maryada*) speaks volumes on marriage, but only that of heterosexual couples; same sex unions remain unmentioned, and this could be viewed as a tacit rejection of such conduct. My interpretation of the question here – same sex unions – is deliberately narrow. For instance, it cannot be stretched to approve polygamy as seen in some

societies, such as that of the Mormons. (Even the Mormons have now changed their code to conform to mainstream US society. They no longer officially approve polygamy, though it is still practiced.) In Sikh belief, such relationships in contemporary society would, by their very nature, be manipulative or exploitive and diminish the sacred intimacy of the relationship.

I know that I am leaving the issue unsettled. That is deliberate, but it is not a delaying tactic. The issue is such that we will not and cannot remain immune from it. It is too important to be left only to preachers whose thinking is circumscribed by the cultural realities of Punjab and India. It is one of those major constitutional and legal issues that societies face from time to time and that are never resolved in a day, a week, a month or even a year.

Let's join the discussion and see what evolves. Let's wait to draw lines in the sand. ijsingh99@gmail.com February 25, 2011
(Reproduced From: The World According to Sikhi by I.J. Singh 2006 The Centennial Foundation, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada)

**MASS GRAVE OF "SIKHS"
KILLED IN NOVEMBER 1984
DISCOVERED IN HARYANA
AFTER 26 YEARS**



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A mass Grave of Sikhs killed in November 1984 has been discovered after 26 years in village Hondh-Chillar, District Rewari, Haryana. The village was inhabited by several Sikh families and on November 02, 1984 in an organized and well planned attack, the entire village was burnt along with its Sikh population and Gurudwara. The village consisting of torched houses, burnt Gurudwara and scattered human bones has been now been discovered.

As per attorney **Gurpatwant Singh Pannun** Legal Advisor to Sikhs For Justice, the forlorn debris and human remains at village Hondh-Chillar discovered after 26 years are the most specific and convincing

evidence of Sikhs localities being attacked and wiped out throughout India in a identical pattern. The evidence discovered on site indicates systematic pattern in which armed groups lead by Congress Leaders would cordon Sikh neighborhoods, rape the women and burn the men and children alive. "The discovery of Mass Grave of Sikhs in Haryana proves that Nanavati Commission's scope of inquiry into the killing of Sikhs was gravely insufficient and eyewash because the commission did not look into killings of Sikhs that took place outside Delhi", added attorney Pannun.

According to **Karnail Singh Peermohammad** scores of Sikhs living in the village were burnt to death on November 02, 1984 and the Police neither identified the dead nor investigated the killing of Sikhs. According to the FIR filed by Ghanpat Singh Sarpanch and other eyewitnesses, the Sikh population of the village was attacked on November 02, 1984 by a group of about 500 people who came in Trucks and were armed. The group was shouting "Ye Sardar Ghaddar hain, Inn ko khatam karain ge" (These Sardars are traitors and we will wipe them out).

Echoing a shock felt by numerous international human rights organizations and activists, Jatinder Singh of Sikhs For Justice added "It is unthinkable the way in which these Sikhs must have been systematically targeted and subjected to the most gruesome methods of mass killing known to humankind. It is horrifying to think that these murders took place with state complicity through carefully orchestrated genocidal acts by armed groups of Indian men, transported from village to village by the state." Adding to this shock, Jatinder Singh also cited that, "An entire village ethnically cleansed of a religious minority is the gravest violation of human rights and the most clearest proof of the Sikh Genocide. The innocent families of Hondh-Chillar village, mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters were all exterminated simply because of their religious beliefs differed from the majority of India."

In addition to the statements made by AISSF and SFJ, researchers have brought forth information that on November 02, 1984 attackers surrounded Sikh houses and attacked by throwing petrol bombs into Sikh homes. Men and children were beaten and thrown into the burning houses and women were first raped and then thrown into the fire. The Sri Guru Granth Sahib was also desecrated and Gurudwara was put on fire as

indication of the murderous rage of the mob, looking to destroy any and all traces of Sikh identity.

In light of the recent discovery, AISSF and Sikhs for Justice (SFJ) will approach United Nations, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and South Asian Human Rights Commission to visit the site of Sikh Mass Graves in village Hondh-Chillar and investigate the attack on Sikhs that took place throughout India in November 1984.

The genocidal site of village Hondh-Chillar is discovered by the sustained and unceasing efforts of **Engineer Manvinder Singh Giaspur**.





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70-YR-OLD 'SURVIVOR' RECALLS HONDH KILLINGS

Navjeevan Gopal, indianexpress.com
 Feb. 20, 2011

Claiming to be a resident of Hondh village in Haryana that is in news these days after it came to light that several Sikh families were allegedly killed in anti-Sikh riots there in 1984, 70-year-old Uttam Singh narrated the November 2, 1984, attack here on Sunday.

Now settled in Bathinda and into a business of clothes, Uttam Singh said he had to take a sleeping pill on Saturday after a news item aired on a TV channel highlighted the attack on Sikhs refreshed his wounds all these years later. SGPC president Avtar Singh Makkar is likely to meet him on Monday.

The Punjab government has constituted a fact finding committee with Akali leader Balwinder Singh Bhunder as its chairman to look into the alleged massacre, brought to light by the All India Sikh Students' Federation a couple of days ago.

"I had managed to get over the pain and trauma. But after watching the story on a news channel, the bad memories are back to haunt me. I had to take a sleeping pill yesterday, as my mind could not help but recall what happened on the fateful day," Uttam said here on Sunday, recounting the "attack by a mob" on the village inhabited by Sikhs.

"My uncle Takht Singh and cousin Harnam Singh's wife Amrit were burnt alive in front of our eyes," said Uttam, a Pakistan-born Sikh who moved to India after Partition.

"The mob entered the village at 11 am and first targeted one Gulab Singh's family, killing 10 members. Next was Sardar Singh's family and seven members were killed. The mob then went to Gurdial Singh's home. The 12 members of his family, including children, had locked themselves in a room, but as the mob heard a child cry, they set the room on fire from outside and all those inside, sitting on a heap of wheat, were burnt alive," said Uttam, adding that the miscreants were using diesel from the tractors of villagers to set houses on fire.

"We moved from one place to other in our house to save our lives. Many of our family members were injured in the process. We managed to get to a portion of the house that had an iron grill. They mob scaled the roof of another room and started pelting us with stones. We started hurling stones back to them. After some time, there was an explosion in a tractor fuel tank. And a rumour spread that Sikhs had bombs with them. The assailants then left the village," Uttam claimed, adding that the survivors left the village at midnight in search of safer places.

He said he first tried to settle in Hoshiarpur but all his business ventures failed there, after which he moved to Bathinda about 25 years ago. He said as many as 10 families who survived the attack had been living in Bathinda and Ludhiana, while a few others were staying in Chandigarh, Panipat and Delhi.

Uttam also spoke to SGPC chief Avtar Singh Makkar on Sunday. Makkar said he would come to Bathinda on Monday to personally meet Uttam. "About five families from Ludhiana who claimed to be hailing from Hondh village have also approached me. I am meeting them, too, on Monday," he added.

BUTA SINGH BLAMES BHAJAN FOR SIKH CARNAGE IN HOND-CHHILAR

Times of India
 Feb. 21 2011

JALANDHAR: Former Union home minister and senior Congress leader Buta Singh has alleged that then chief minister Bhajan Lal was responsible for not only the alleged massacre of around 60 Sikhs in Hond-Chhilar village of Rewari district in November '84 but also for the cover-up, as the incident remained unreported till a couple of days ago.

In fact, he also accused Bhajan Lal for adding, "Bitterness between the then Congress ruled Union government and the Sikhs, as the latter were humiliated by the Haryana police on National Highway during 1982 Delhi Asiad Games."

"Clearly Bhajan Lal behaved in a communal manner and this added to the problems between the Sikhs and the Centre which led to the unfortunate developments in 1984," Buta Singh said while talking to media persons at the residence of Railway trade union leader Gulzar Singh.

Around 60 Sikhs were allegedly killed when a mob destroyed the entire village but the incident remained unreported for the last around 26 years and it has only now been brought to light by two NGOs -- **Sikhs for Justice** and **All India Sikh Students Federation**. The NGOs have brought out that though the police had registered an FIR regarding the alleged killing of 20 persons but nothing was done to identify the victims and the accused. The [redacted] testimony to the carnage.

Buta Singh blamed the influence of Arya Samaj for the anti-Sikh hatred in Haryana at that time. "Arya Samaj had been creating that hatred against the Sikhs," he said

SIKH BODIES TO SEEK U.N. INTERVENTION

Victims from mass graves of Sikhs killed in November 1984 in Haryana identified.

February 20, 2011: New York, USA.

A few days after discovery of Mass Grave of Sikhs killed in November 1984 in village Hondh-Chillar, District Rewari, Haryana, AISSF & SFJ traced and identified at least 29 of the victims from the Mass Grave. The witnesses who identified the Sikh victims of mass grave are among the few who survived the attack on village Hondh-Chillar on November 02, 1984.

A delegation of SFJ and AISSF will go to Los Angeles, California to meet Mr. Ban Ki-moon UN Secretary General on February 23rd. As per attorney Gurpatwant Singh Pannun Legal Advisor to Sikhs For Justice, SFJ will present eyewitness account, images, copies of official records and other evidence to the United Nations asking the UN to intervene and take the control of the genocidal site at village Hondh-Chillar before government led by congress (I) destroys the most specific and convincing evidence of Sikhs being

attacked and wiped out throughout India in a identical pattern, solely due to their religious belief.

Regards, Gurpatwant S Pannun, Legal Advisor, Sikhs For Justice
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REWARI MASSACRE

SGPC chief meets survivors

Rajay Deep/TNS

Bathinda, February 21, 2011

The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) President, Avtar Singh Makkar, accompanied by two executive members of the committee today met six families of Bathinda, which claim to be the survivors of the 1984 Sikh riots that took place in Hond Chillar village in Rewari district, Haryana.

After listening to the survivors, the SGPC chief assured them of providing the best possible assistance to get compensation and bringing the culprits to book. The SGPC chief said he had formed separate panels to collect the details and probe the matter, adding that the committee would also form a panel of top criminal lawyers to pursue the case in courts.

Describing the killing of Sikhs as a "well-planned" conspiracy, Makkar said he had been told that many of the officials had allegedly connived to shield the accused. "As the survivors of the massacre have told me that the then Haryana Chief Minister, Bhajan Lal, had also played a role in covering up the matter, we regard him as an accomplice of Jagdish Tytler and Sajjan Kumar, the prime accused in the 1984 riots," said Makkar.

“As we have taken up the responsibility to fight for the cause of the riot victims, we shall collect all information required from the revenue, municipal and electoral records. FIRs and the action taken by the police will also be studied in-depth. Once the process is completed, the future course of action will be chalked out on the basis of the facts,” he said.

The SGPC chief also demanded a high-level probe by the Centre, saying, “Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who is also a Sikh, must show concern and immediately order a probe into the matter. The inquiry must be conducted by a senior judicial officer.”

When asked why the issue had surfaced after 26 years and that too when the SGPC elections are just a few months away, Makkar said politics had nothing to do with it. “We are surprised that such a brutal act took place in a village but was not noticed. Much to my shock, a family (survivors of the massacre) from Ludhiana was very close to me but never shared its experience with me earlier. But I assure you that the fight is to help the survivors to get their rights and not to gain any political mileage,” he said.

Meanwhile, some of the riot victims accused the district administration of indifference. They alleged that despite submitting applications for the red card and other benefits, the officials concerned never took them seriously. Taking serious note of the complaint, Makkar directed the SAD’s Bathinda in charge, Sarup Chand Singla, to pursue their case seriously. Makkar said he would personally visit the village on Tuesday.

‘IT WAS HEIGHT OF BRUTALITY’

Rajay Deep Tribune News Service
Bathinda, February 21, 2011

“The pain in my arm and the head due to the lathi blows rained by the rioters reminds me of the bloodshed and arson that took place on November 2, 1984,” said 70-year-old Jaswant Kaur, who survived the anti-Sikh massacre at Hond Chillar village in Rewari district of Haryana. Failing to control her tears, Jaswant Kaur said in a feeble voice, “I was in the streets when a truck reached there at about 11 AM and dozens of men jumped out of it. They were so menacing that we rushed inside our haveli.”

“When they did not enter our house till 2 pm, we thought things had settled down. But we were wrong. Within minutes, armed with lathis, the rioters attacked our houses. Frightened, we locked ourselves inside the rooms. When they failed to break open the doors, they drilled holes in the roof and started pouring diesel and kerosene inside and set the rooms on fire. Feeling suffocated, we rushed outside and the rioters attacked us,” said Jaswant Kaur.

“The bloody episode lasted for a couple of hours in which about 32 persons, all our relatives except for an Army man, who had come for shelter in the village, were killed. It was the height of brutality when 12 members of Gurdial Singh’s family, who had locked themselves up in a room, were set ablaze by the rioters by setting the room on fire. The number could have gone higher but a blast took place in the fuel tank of a tractor that led them to think that some of us had bombs and they fled,” recalled her husband Uttam Singh.

When asked if they would like to settle down again in their village, the couple refused saying, “The bloodshed we witnessed there will not allow us even a single night’s sleep.

I wish the government books the guilty and builds a memorial to those killed there during the riots,” demanded Uttam Singh.

REWARI MASSACRE

**SGPC chief meets victims, seeks probe by HC Judge
Perneet Singh**

Tribune News Service
Amritsar, February 22, 2011



The President of the SGPC, Avtar Singh Makkar, today rejected the Divisional Commissioner-level

probe ordered by the Haryana Government into the alleged Rewari massacre and sought a judicial investigation by a sitting Punjab and Haryana High Court judge into it.

The SGPC chief stated this after interacting with the survivors of the “massacre” at the Hond-Chillar village in the Rewari District. He said the Haryana Government must identify those behind the incident and punish them to provide justice to the families of innocent people killed in it.

He said an Akhand Path would be held at Akal Takht from March 2 to March 4 in the memory of those killed in the incident. Makkar blamed the Congress for the incident in which 32 people were killed, including 12 from Gurdayal Singh’s family, 16 from Gulab Singh’s family, the ‘granthi’ of the village gurdwara, and an Armyman, who had taken shelter in the village. He demanded that the families of those killed should be given their properties back, as their property was “under illegal occupation”.

On some Sikh outfits raising a demand for building a memorial in the village, Makkar said it was a matter of the entire Sikh community and they would reach a decision after holding discussions with the organizations.

He said the SGPC and the SAD-BJP Government would extend all possible assistance to the affected families. He rejected the charge made by the HSGPC (ad hoc) Chief, Jagdish Singh Jhinda, that the issue was being politicised. He urged the Prime Minister, the Union Home Minister and the Haryana Chief Minister to take immediate notice of the issue, visit the site of the “carnage” and initiate appropriate action.

REVISITING A CARNAGE

Ghost of Chhillar haunts Haryana

20 persons were killed in the Rewari village in the '84 riots
Raman Mohan/TNS

Chhillar (Rewari), February 23, 2011

More than 26 years after 20 men, women and children (the number mentioned in the FIR according to the police) were allegedly burnt alive in riots following the assassination of Indira Gandhi, the mystery remains unresolved. All main characters in this sordid drama — the police, the residents and the survivors — have a lot

to answer for. The police must explain why the case was closed and how the FIR, which was registered after the incident, was lost or misplaced.

Villagers need to explain why they failed to intervene when, according to them, an estimated 300-strong mob of “outsiders” went on a killing spree that lasted (as per their own version) for six to eight hours. This happened even when the villagers outnumbered the mob. As for survivors, they too need to come forward and explain why they have kept quiet all these years. In the words of 83-year-old Dhanpat Singh Yadav, the then sarpanch of Chhillar, this is what happened on the morning of November 2, 1984.

“It was a bright sunny day. Around 10 am, a mob of 250 to 300 men, all outsiders, arrived in the village in a Haryana Roadways bus and a truck. They carried jerry cans of diesel and were armed with rods and sticks. They headed straight for the Sikh settlement, about 1 km from the main village, where 13 Sikh families had been living since they migrated from Pakistan in 1947,” recalls Yadav. The settlement was known as Haud, a reference to the pond built there by a Muslim fakir in 1920, he tells.

“When I was informed about the mob, I rushed there with around six villagers. We challenged them. But they threatened to burn us alive. We were made to sit there as several of them stood guard over us. The mob attacked men, women and children who were outside. A few were set ablaze outside their houses. Others fled to the safety of their homes and locked themselves up,” he says.

“The mobsters dug holes in the roofs, poured diesel inside and set fire. At least 20 of the victims were trapped inside. Meanwhile, 30 men, women and children locked themselves up inside a room on the first floor of a house. At around 5 pm, a section of the mob approached the room. One young Sikh, Balwant Singh, suddenly came out and attacked the mob. One mobster got a deep cut on his shoulder. The mob then withdrew and left the village. The villagers then escorted the survivors safely to Rewari,” he says. None of them ever came back to the village, he adds. “In the following years, they sold their land and houses, most of which have now been demolished.”

CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE AT CHHILLAR

Unanswered questions: How, when and why did the police close the case?

How and when did the FIR disappear?

If villagers played no role in the rioting, why have they been silent?

Raman Mohan

Tribune News Service

Chhillar (Rewari), February 23 2011

The survivors of the Chhillar massacre during the anti-Sikh riots of November, 1984, are so traumatised even after the lapse of so many years that they are reluctant to say anything on the subject. But the Chief Minister has called for a report from the Commissioner and some of the survivors have been requested to record their statements, it is learnt.

The then Sarpanch, Dhanpat Singh Yadav, an eyewitness, told The Tribune, “The police arrived the morning after the massacre. An FIR was registered at the Jatusana police station as the village came under Mahendragarh district then. The SP was also present. “The police rounded up a few villagers. I was among them. We were abused and hit with lathis. That was all. Nothing happened after that,” he recalled.

There is no reason to disbelieve Yadav who commands a lot of respect in the village. But, many questions remain unanswered. How could a bus and a truck carry 250 to 300 men? The residents outnumbered the mob. Why then did they not resist? How could a mob of outsiders go on a killing spree for close to eight hours without being challenged? Those familiar with rural Haryana cannot believe that outsiders would stay in the village for that long.

Enquiries by The Tribune reveal that FIR No 91 was registered at the Jatusana police station after the incident. It mentioned 20 deaths caused by unidentified people numbering around 200. A senior police officer, pleading anonymity, said that the names of two villagers were added later. But they were let off after they turned out to be the farmhands of the victims. The case was then closed. He said the FIR had since been lost and the police had registered an FIR on the lost FIR relating to the massacre.

The survivors are reported to be residing in Hari Nagar in New Delhi, Ludhiana, Jalandhar and Ferozpur. It is possible that they kept quiet because they wanted to

salvage whatever they could and sell off the land in the village.

Did they keep mum all these years fearing they may not be able to sell their land if they named any villager? Politicians have been thronging the village for the past few days accompanied by mediapersons. The SGPC chief, Avtar Singh Makkar, visited the village yesterday in a cavalcade of cars and accompanied by a dozen Punjab Policemen. He announced that prayers would be held at the Akal Takht for the victims.

The land of the victims are today lush green fields. But the ruins of two houses and a masjid turned into a gurdwara stand as mute memorials to the victims.

The mazaar of the fakir, painted in white, also appears to mourn the dead who lovingly maintained it for years. Chhillar village is 12 km from Rewari. Till 1947, it was inhabited by Muslims. The evacuee property was allotted mainly to Yadav families from Pakistan. Thirteen Makkar Sikh families were also allotted land and houses in the village. These families converted an abandoned mosque into a gurdwara. The gurdwara has “Ji aayaan nu” etched on the facade. The residents described the Sikh victims as “very affable and friendly persons”.

SIKH BODIES MOVE HC ON REWARI KILLINGS

Tribune News Service

Chandigarh, February 23, 2011

Nearly 27 years after members of the Sikh community were “brutally killed” in “horrific incidents of communal violence” in Hondh-Chhillar village in Rewari district, New York-registered Sikhs for Justice and the All-India Sikh Students Federation have sought a probe by a retired High Court Judge.

In their petition against the State of Haryana, the Rewari Superintendent of Police and another respondent, they have also sought CBI assistance for the retired High Court judge. The petitioners, through counsel Navkiran Singh, have asserted that the victims’ belongings were burnt and even a gurdwara was reduced to ashes. However, the state on January 16, 2006, pronounced compensation only for the deceased. No compensation was provided for other losses.

Navkiran Singh added that the FIR, dated November 3, 1984, registered under Sections 148, 149, 302, 436 and 34 of the IPC at the Jatusana police station, had not been investigated properly. "None of the eyewitnesses has ever been contacted by the police in the investigation and the crime has gone undetected".

The petition, placed before the Bench of Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi and Justice Augustine George Masih, comes soon after one of the survivors, Uttam Singh, claimed in newspaper interviews that none of the eyewitnesses or survivors were ever contacted by the Haryana police.

The petitioners added: "Since the then Chief Minister of Haryana, Bhajan Lal, was allegedly inimical to the Sikhs and there were reported incidents of harassment of Sikhs in Haryana during his tenure and since the killings of the Sikhs had started from Delhi, which at that time also had the same political party in power as in Haryana, a free and fair investigation was not possible".

As of now, the Bench has not issued a notice of motion on the petition; and it stands adjourned.

CHHILLAR—REVISITING A CARNAGE

SGPC renews demand for judicial probe

Perneet Singh/TNS

Amritsar, February 24, 2011

The SGPC today shot off a missive to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, renewing its demand for a judicial probe into the Chhillar massacre in Rewari (Haryana) in November 1984 during anti-Sikh rioting after Indira Gandhi's assassination.

In his letter, the SGPC Chief Avtar Singh Makkar said that ever since the incident was reported in the media a week ago, the SGPC has been flooded with representations and calls, condemning the heinous incident and seeking a probe into it. "We, therefore, request you to kindly order a detailed and time-bound probe of the genocide at Hond-Chhillar village by a sitting judge of the Punjab and Haryana High Court to deliver justice to the victims without further delay," he stated.

The DSGMC chief Paramjeet Singh Sarna, who also visited Hond-Chhillar village on Wednesday, urged the Haryana CM to personally intervene in the matter,

ensure identification of the culprits and punish them. He said that an Akhand Path will be held at Gurdwara Bangla Sahib in New Delhi on March 4-6 for the peace of the departed souls.

Meanwhile, eight Sikh outfits led by the Khalsa Action Committee also submitted a memorandum to Haryana CM Bhupinder Singh Hooda, seeking a judicial probe into the carnage. Meanwhile, one of the survivors, Prem Singh, currently living in Ludhiana, explained the two and a half decade long silence and told a delegation from the SGPC, "We were appalled by the enormity of the anti-Sikh riots in New Delhi and when we noticed that even Delhi Sikhs were being denied justice, we wondered who would listen to us? Therefore we didn't make much effort to pursue the case further. However, we narrated our tale whenever somebody questioned us about our past."

For instance, he said, they got their red cards made in Ludhiana, for which a proper inquiry was carried out and Hond-Chhillar sarpanch verified their antecedents. Kesar Singh, another survivor living in Bathinda, said, "We were so terrified that let alone pursuing the case we did not visit the village for almost a year. Later, we went there and sold off our agricultural land at throwaway prices as we had no intention to return."

Noted lawyer HS Phoolka, who is contesting the case against senior Congress leader Sajjan Kumar on behalf of the survivors of 1984 anti-Sikh riots, said, "it is not the responsibility of the victim to take the case to its logical end. The onus is on the government to see that the guilty are punished."

HOODA GOVT OPEN TO COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

Geetanjali Gayatri/TNS

Chandigarh, February 24, 2011

Even as investigation into the Chhillar massacre of November 1984 began with the Gurgaon Divisional Commissioner, TK Sharma, visiting the site in Rewari today, Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda told The Tribune that records hold that compensation was paid to the victims.

"The state government gave Rs 3.5 lakh in 2002 and then again in 2006 for every deceased while Rs 1 lakh (Rs 10,000 in 2002 and Rs 90,000 in 2006) was given to compensate the families for the loss of their material

goods," he said.

Maintaining that investigations are still on in the case, which has hogged headlines in recent weeks, the CM said the government would wait for the findings of the Divisional Commissioner before weighing other options. "We are open to a Commission of Inquiry if the findings of the report so indicate," he stated.

Meanwhile, at the time of the carnage in 1984, Rewari was a part of Mahendergarh district. Sources in the government recalled that following former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's assassination, senior officials of the district, the then Deputy Commissioner SC Chaudhary, presently posted as Financial Commissioner and Principal Secretary, Public Health, and the then Superintendent of Police, Sateynder Kumar, holding the charge of Additional DG, Home Guards, were camping at Rewari itself.

A number of trucks were being set on fire by the mob on the national highway and necessitated their camping in Rewari and it was only two days later that information of the massacre at Chhillar had trickled in. Sources maintain that at that time there was some contradiction in the number of victims of the carnage with the police claiming that the actual number of the dead was less than what was being claimed.

KILLERS MOTIVE WAS "REVENGE" SAYS FIR

**SIKHS FOR JUSTICE AND ALL INDIA SIKH
STUDENT FEDERATION**

MOVE HIGH COURT ON REWARI KILLINGS

Sikhs for Justice and All India Sikh Student Federation have moved the Punjab and Haryana High Court demanding a judicial probe into the horrific killing of Sikhs in village Hondh-Chillar in Rewari District, Haryana on November 2, 1984. In a Civil writ petition filed with the Punjab and Haryana High Court, Sikhs for Justice and All India Sikh Student Federation demanded an enquiry from a retired High Court to be assisted by the Central Bureau of Investigation.

Representing the petitioners, Advocate Navkiran Singh stated that proper investigation was never done in this case. None of the eyewitnesses or survivors were ever contacted by the police. On November 2, 1984 in an organized attack the entire Sikh population of village

Hondh- Chillar, then district Mahendergarh presently falling under district Rewari, Haryana was massacred and their dwellings and the Gurudwara were burnt down.

According to the FIR, no 91, a copy of which was presented in the Punjab and Haryana High Court on Wednesday, which was registered at police station Jatusana in Mahendergarh district, now in Rewari, based on DDR no 5, the killers had first arrived in a truck from the side of Hali Mandi in Pataudi, Gurgaon district on the morning of November 2, at around 11am, but were "pacified" by a group of villagers of Chillar and persuaded to go back. However, they returned in the evening, accompanied by more people in two or three trucks and started the bloodbath. "They said they were determined to eliminate the Sikhs because those Sikhs had killed our beloved leader Indira Gandhi" reads the statement recorded by the complainant in the FIR.

The FIR was registered on the complaint of Dhanpat Singh, the then sarpanch of Chillar who has stated that the killers came back in the evening and started burning the dwellings of the Sikhs. Though, the locals tried to stop them but the killers carried on their arson and attack, while threatening the locals to keep out. The complaint states, "Deep Chand Nambardar, Nanak Chand, Kanhaiya Lal Panch, a resident of Nurpur came to the spot and tried to convince them (killers). But, none of them paid any heed to it and said that Sikhs are traitors and we will finish them, and if you said a word then you will also face bad consequences. They were 400-500 in number and they put houses and shed on fire and started pelting stones, due to which some people were burnt in the houses".

The sarpanch also stated that the locals could not identify the burnt bodies, which were 20 in number. "We wanted to come to report the incident immediately but those people confined us and did not allow us to come." He also mentions the name of Subedar Deep Chand, who accompanied the sarpanch to the police station to report the incident.

The FIR was attested and signed by head constable Ram Kumar and it was registered under sections 148/149/302/436 and 34 of IPC. The document also says that a "special report is being sent by hand through Lal Prashad to Illaqa magistrate sahib and

officers. Since the SHO sahib has gone to Rewari along with officials vide report no 21, dated 1.11.84 for special duty, he is being informed through wireless, and I, 2 HC along with constable Dharampal are leaving for the spot along with Dhanpat and Deep Chand."

Sikhs for Justice and AISSF have demanded 'proper investigations', claiming that the killings were never investigated even after an FIR was registered. The local police on Wednesday claimed that they did not have any record of the said FIR, while AISSF president Karnail Singh Peermohammad told TOI that he, along with engineer Manwinder Singh, who had discovered the village first, had procured the FIR from the same police station a few days ago. "We have a signed copy from the same police station," he stated.

Attorney Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, legal counsel for Sikhs for Justice stated that the brutal killings at Hondh-Chiilar further confirms that the attacks on the Sikhs in November 1984 were not sudden and angry reaction but a planned and organized massacre of the Sikhs and the way the massacre has remained undetected and the guilty unpunished, demonstrates complicity and participation by the highest functionaries of the ruling party and the government. The Bench of Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi and Justice Augustine George Masih before who the petition was placed adjourned the matter to **March 1, 2011**.

"KILL ALL THE SIKHS"

ORDERS FROM CONGRESS (I) HEADQUARTERS

EYEWITNESS ACCOUNT

New York: February 25, 2011.

Sikhs For Justice has attained a sworn statement of an ex-congress student leader who attended the notorious Congress Party meeting held at Akbar Road Delhi on October 31, 1984 in which the leadership of Congress hatched the conspiracy to eliminate Sikhs across India. The statement has come to SFJ after the discovery of mass grave of Sikhs killed in November 1984 at village Hondh-Chillar, District Rewari, Haryana and news of Congress leader and then chief Minister of Haryana Bhajan Lal's direct involvement in the killing of Sikhs in Haryana,

The statement given under oath and on the condition and promise of anonymity states that:

"Since my college days, I was associated with Congress (I) party. In 1974, with the help of my party, I contested the election for President of Student Union of the college and thereafter I continued attended party rallies.

"On 31st October 1984, after the death of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the leaders of Congress-I, called a meeting at the head office at 24 Akbar Road, New Delhi. I went over there and in the meeting Jagdish Tytler, Sajjan Kumar, Lalit Makan, HKL Bhagat and all such leaders participated in the meeting.

These leaders agreed and announced to all others present that meeting that "we will avenge the death of Mrs. Indira Gandhi". They motivated the members that Sikhs had killed Indira Gandhi and we should also "kill all the Sikhs" and "the houses and property should be burned". They were planning against Sikhs and I could not bear..."

SFJ has obtained another affidavit from a witness who verifies that Haryana Police actively killed Sikhs and participated in attack on Sikhs during November 1984. According to witness, "On 2-11-84, again at about 11 AM, one train came and halted on the railway line adjoining our colony and Gujjars in large groups alighted from the train. They were thousands in number and were all armed with identical lathis and iron rods. They immediately formed groups and started indulging in arson, looting, killing and burning of Sikhs including their properties. One of the Gujjars who was the member of this mob was caught by me and some other Sikhs who were trying to protect themselves from them. On being caught **one identity card of Haryana Police was recovered from him**, which was a clear indication and evidence that the mob to which he belonged were members of Madhuban police training center near Karnal in Haryana and they were sent to Delhi to create chaos, lawlessness and destruction."

According to attorney Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, legal advisor to Sikhs for Justice, the statement of witness who attended the notorious Congress (I) "meeting on October 31, 1984 at Akbar Road" is a very significant as it is a clear and direct evidence that genocidal attacks and killings of Sikhs in November 1984 was planned and perpetrated by the Congress (I) and its leadership using congress workers, police,

administration officials and other resources to achieve the target of killing as many Sikhs as possible. Sikhs in November 1984 were not riots but were genocide organized, planned, orchestrated and carried out by the Congress (I) who was in power at that time, added attorney Pannun.

According to attorney Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, legal advisor to Sikhs for Justice, the statement of this individual, whose name cannot be revealed at this time due to the privacy issues, is very significant as it is direct and clear evidence that attacks on Sikhs in November 1984 were not riots but were genocide organized, planned, orchestrated and carried out by the Congress (I) who was in power at that time.

Attorney Pannun further stated that this individual's statement regarding Congress's involvement in November 1984 is also corroborated by the statements regarding Bhajan Lal's involvement and use of Haryana Transport buses for fetching the killers to village Hondh-Chillar.

CHHILLAR KILLINGS ROCK PARLIAMENT

Aditi Tandon & Ashok Tuteja
Tribune News Service
New Delhi, March 1, 2011

Twenty-seven years after several Sikh families of Hondh-Chillar village of Rewari in Haryana were massacred in the aftermath of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's assassination, the Parliament came alive to the issue today with both the Houses being adjourned amidst demands for justice.

Armed with the voters' list and land records of Sikh victims, who the Haryana police declared as untraced (the FIR stated 20 killings where 70 were allegedly killed), the Shiromani Akali Dal members in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha stormed the well, seeking a debate on the issue and action against those who covered up for the culprits.

In both the Houses, the Presiding Officers assured discussions on the Chhillar anti-Sikh massacre, with Akali MPs warning of disruptions unless the matter was listed for debate in the Business Advisory Committee meeting this week. The Chhillar massacre was first reported by The Tribune; the newspaper copies were flashed in both the Houses today. In Rajya Sabha, Akali

and BJP members were exercised with the fact that the files pertaining to the incident had gone missing, as reported.

In the Lower House, SAD's Bathinda member Harsimrat Kaur Badal led the charge, questioning the Congress government's silence on the matter and said it was time for action against the perpetrators. "For all these years, Haryana did nothing to bring the perpetrators to book; the state police dismissed the FIR as untraced. But now, two Sikh organisations have procured the land records of Sikhs who were killed, the voters' lists that prove their inhabitation in Chhillar, the eye-witness accounts of the massacre. What more is needed to punish the culprits?" she asked, raising the issue soon as the LS assembled. Following the ruckus, it was adjourned for 15 minutes.

When the House reassembled, the Leader of Opposition Sushma Swaraj sought a discussion on the issue which LS Speaker Meira Kumar granted. The Rajya Sabha too was similarly adjourned for an hour soon as it met. Upon re-assembling, BJP's S.S. Ahluwalia asked Chairman Hamid Ansari for a discussion. The latter asked the members to give a notice for the same.

In the Rajya Sabha, the Akalis demanded that Home Minister P Chidambaram be called in to respond to their queries. Some members, including Rudra Narayan Pany (BJP) and Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa (SAD), trooped into the well shouting slogans.

The Akalis remained unconvinced with the Haryana CM Bhupinder Singh Hooda's order of a Commissioner-level inquiry into the killings.

1984. RIOTS IN PATAUDI NOT A WHISPER ESCAPED

Tehelka – India's Independent Weekly News Magazine,
March 5, 2011

As the media focusses on Haryana's Hondh-Chillar massacre, AVALOK LANGER unearths evidence of another anti-Sikh carnage never reported before
AMIDST FIELDS of ripening wheat, a man who had never shed a tear wept inconsolably. Manwinder Singh Giaspur, 35, a textile engineer based in Gurgaon, broke down when he discovered the 26-year-old secret of genocide. On 2 November 1984, a mob attacked the

small Sikh hamlet of Hondh-Chillar located 15 km from Pataudi, in Rewari district of Haryana. The remnants of burnt buildings are the only testimony to a shameful truth: that the anti-Sikh riots had also claimed victims in Haryana with the same ruthless efficiency displayed in Delhi.

Overwhelmed by a blitz of reporters, camera crews and *netas*, the then sarpanch and eyewitness, Dhanpat Singh Yadav, ran his finger through his thinning grey hair and said, “For 26 years you all were fast asleep, now suddenly the media has woken up and come to find out what happened?”



GEEVNI BAI, 70+ *Lost her husband and three sons* She escaped with her three daughters, whom she had to bring up on her own. She received a widow’s pension for only three months

AMRIT KAUR, 55 *Lost her husband* To escape the mob, she hid in a neighbour’s toilet for hours with three of her four children. She was forced to sweep houses to raise her children

SHANTI DEVI, 55 *Lost her father-in-law* She was forced to hide in the jungle at first and then kept moving from house to house to escape the rioters

ISRI BAI, 70+ *Lost her husband and one son* She was forced to flee during Partition. She moved to Pataudi where her house was burnt and looted during the 1984 riots

The attack came in two waves, he recalled. The villagers of Chillar and Hondh were able to fend off the first group of attackers on 1 November, but at 10 am the next day, a truck and a bus carrying 200-250 young men armed with rods, lathis, diesel and matches stormed the village. Overawed by the aggression and repeated threats by the outsiders, the villagers stood helpless as they killed 31 Sikh men, women and children and razed their bungalows and gurudwara to the ground. While some were burnt alive, others were beaten to death. The four-hour-long carnage came to an abrupt halt when a group of Sikhs broke out of their burning house armed with swords and attacked the rioters. Under the cover of night, the 32 survivors were

taken by tractor to Rewari, from where they scattered across the country like Partition refugees.

“An FIR was filed (now apparently lost), a brief inquiry was also carried out, the police knew all the details, the local MLA Col. Ram Singh was aware of the killings but nothing happened. Everyone knew about it but chose to forget,” adds Dhanpat. As media reports from Ground Zero pour in and parties move in to get maximum mileage, TEHELKA stumbled upon memories of another genocide. In a town known for its debonair Nawabs, 17 Sikhs were butchered in Pataudi.

Sitting in a small, unkempt room, Gurjeet Singh, pradhan of Pataudi’s Gurudwara Singh Sahib said, “I have kept this room of my house unchanged from the ’84 riots. I want my children to see what was done to us at the hands of our own people, in our own country.” He looked at his son, smiled sardonically and added, “Every day mediapersons and *netas* pass through Pataudi on their way to Hondh-Chillar, but no one has come here to find out what happened to the Sikh families. Before 1984, there were close to 30 Sikh families in Pataudi, but today there are only five. We, who chose to stay back, were forced to rise out of the sewers to rebuild our lives.”

Gurjeet’s mother Pritam Kaur, wrapped in a grey shawl, leaning on her walking stick, said, “Every night, in every idle moment of every day, I am haunted by those memories. Whatever property that was taken, is gone. There is nothing we can do about that now, but the pain, the memories of fear and death will never fade.”



Pritam Kaur 80, lost her house and commercial shops She and her son Gurjeet Singh, the pradhan of the local gurudwara, stay in a house that still bears scars from the riots

At 6 pm on 1 November, panic filled the city as the gurudwara was set on fire. The Sikhs of Pataudi ran for their lives, hiding wherever they could find cover as an angry mob ripped through the town burning their houses. While one group ran to the safety of the village, another chose to stay in the local ashram.

Leaving the safety of the ashram the next morning, they went to their respective houses to assess the damage. Separated, out in the open, tired and crying, they were attacked by a frenzied mob at 10 am. Many hid in neighbours' houses, some escaped to the village but 17 people were brutally murdered that day. Burnt alive, their charred bodies — the 'evidence' — were piled up and burnt to ashes.

Gurjeet narrates the story of two sisters, Harmeet Kaur, 16, and Karamjeet Kaur, 19. "The mob dragged them out into the street, stripped them, abused them, beat them, urinated on their faces and burnt them alive," he says. "There was no sense of human dignity, no sense of compassion. What role did these girls have in Mrs Gandhi's assassination? Were we all responsible? *Sardaron ke bachche hai, tho marao* (They are children of sardars, so kill them)."

THOUGH MULTIPLE FIRs were lodged, no one was caught or prosecuted and the stories of Pataudi, like those of Hondh, have remained but whispers in once glorious havelis. However, when asked for an action plan, Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda said, "Action will be taken in accordance with the report filed by the Gurgaon Commissioner. Though compensation has been given, the guilty must be punished. If the report deems judicial action is needed, we will pursue it."



Damning evidence FIRs and photographs of burnt houses
PHOTOS: TARUN SEHRAWAT

When asked why no one brought out these stories before, Gurjeet said, "The media, the Sikh organisations, the politicians had all labelled the riots as

the 'Delhi riots'. We had no influential leader. There was no local media, we were scared and alone, what could we do? As time passed, we were faced with the responsibility of rebuilding our future, looking to the needs of our families, we did not have the time, resources or support to fight against the system. And to be honest, when you lose your whole world, your will to fight dies."

Physically, emotionally and financially, none of the Sikh families of Pataudi have been able to recover. If stagnation is normalcy, their lives are on an even keel

GARG PANEL TO PROBE CHHILLAR KILLINGS

Tribune News Service
Chandigarh, March 5, 2011

A former Judge of the Punjab and Haryana High Court, Justice TP Garg, will probe the killings of over 20 Sikhs in Hondh Chhillar village in Rewari district of Haryana and the damage caused to their property in November 1984.

Announcing this here today, Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda said the TP Garg Commission of Inquiry had been appointed in response to a demand by various sections of society. It would submit its report to the state government within six months from the date of its first sitting. The headquarters of the commission would be at Hisar.

Hooda said the commission would probe the incidents of violence, which targeted members of the Sikh community living in Hondh Chhillar village. The commission would also investigate the sequence of events that led to the violence, including facts related to the number of victims who died and the damage caused to property.

The CM said the commission would devise its own procedures for the conduct of the inquiry subject to the provisions of the Commission of Inquiry Act of 1952.

'SIKH GENOCIDE MEMORIAL'

to come up in Hondh Chhillar
Akali Takht Jathedar lays foundation stone
Perneet Singh Tribune News Service
Amritsar, March 6, 2011

Akal Takht Jathedar Giani Gurbachan Singh today laid the foundation stone of a “Sikh Genocide Memorial” at the site of the Hondh Chhillar massacre in Rewari district, Haryana. This will be the first-of-its-kind memorial to those who were killed in the 1984 riots.

Talking to The Tribune, the Jathedar said: “At present, the houses of Sikh families and the village gurdwara, lying in a shambles, will be preserved while a decision on any new addition at the site will be taken later. The village sarpanch has also assured of full cooperation in preserving these buildings.”

AISF President Karnail Singh Peermohammed said, “The Sikh sangat donated Rs 25 lakh for the memorial today itself on the occasion of the ‘bhog ceremony of the akhand path performed in the memory of those killed in the carnage.” He also clarified that any new construction at the memorial site would take place only on directions of Akal Takht.

He said the AISF and the Sikhs for Justice would also launch a “Sikh insaaf lehar” with the support of the SAD (Panch Pardhani) and Sant Baba Baljeet Singh Daduwal. The “lehar” is aimed at locating the sites throughout India where Sikhs were killed in November 1984.

“Under the campaign, we will collect evidence, documents and preserve the genocide locations, for which we will send delegations and investigating teams to all the states where Sikhs were killed,” he said adding that a “Sikh Genocide Trust” would also be established to locate, preserve and manage “genocidal sites” across the country.

While advocate Navkiran Singh, a human rights lawyer, had been entrusted the responsibility of the chief legal counsel to follow the cases of 1984 in India, Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, legal adviser to the Sikhs for Justice, would take on the onus for international lobbying, advocacy and campaigning. He said they would also immerse the “ashes” of those killed in Hondh Chhillar in Kiratpur Sahib on March 9. Reacting to the move, SGPC President Avtar Singh Makkar said the memorial should be raised at the site only after holding consultations with the survivors of the tragedy and taking into confidence all Sikh organisations.

SIKHS FOR JUSTICE DELEGATION APPRISED “UNESCO” DIRECTOR GENERAL ON HONDH-CHILLAR GENOCIDAL SITE

**Urged to preserve and manage Hondh-Chillar as Genocidal Site under
World Heritage Program
New York (March 10, 2011)**

A delegation of Sikhs for Justice (SFJ) met and apprised Her Excellency Irina Bokova, Director General UNESCO on March 10 in New York about the discovery of “Mass Grave” of Sikhs in Hondh-Chillar, District Rewari, Haryana, India and submitted a written request asking UNESCO to preserve and manage the ruins of Hondh-Chillar as genocidal site under World Heritage Program. UNESCO is a body of UN that protects, preserves and manages sites across the world including India.

According to Tejkaran Kaur Bains, Youth Coordinator SFJ who presented Memorandum to the Director General Her Excellency Irina Bokova on March 10, since UNESCO is mandated to protect ruins and sites across the world, SFJ has approached UNESCO to manage and preserve the ruins of Village Hondh-Chillar, before they are completely destroyed just like many such sites across India where Sikhs were attacked and killed in November 1984.

From New York, Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, legal advisor to SFJ, stated that in November 1984 Sikh localities across India were attacked in manner identical to Hondh-Chillar, however, as a well planned cover up, remains and ruins of almost all other such sites were either cleansed or rebuilt in order to purge the traces of genocidal attacks on Sikhs carried out during November 1984. To make sure that forlorn debris of Hondh-Chillar, a living paradigm of Sikh genocide, is not destroyed, SFJ has approached UNESCO to step in and preserve the remains of Hondh-Chillar, added attorney Pannun.

Highlighting the importance of this move, attorney Pannun further stated that not only UNESCO has authority and mandate to take charge of remains of village Hondh-Chillar, but India is also bound to cooperate and allow UNESCO to preserve such sites pursuant to the Convention ratified by India on November 14, 1977.

SFJ have invited reputable archeologists from Europe and North America who have worked on Jewish Holocaust sites and Armenian Genocide sites to seek expert guidance in preserving Hondh-Chillar Genocidal site. Jatinder Singh Grewal, SFJ Coordinator-Canada will accompany the team

of foreign archeologists visiting Hondh-Chillar at the request of SFJ to survey and give recommendations for preservation of Hondh-Chillar Genocide ruins.

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THE CONCEPT OF ALTRUISM IN GURBANI

Sawan Singh Gogia [sawansingh85@gmail.com]

Altruism means sincerely and selflessly helping a needy person. Humility is very important while doing any act of altruism so that the needy person does not feel inferiority complex. Caste, creed, color and religion of the needy person should not be kept in view when he is being helped. An altruist must not aim at earning fame or glory while performing his act of altruism. He should not propagate or boast of his good deeds.

According to gurbani, altruism is a divine quality. Guru Arjan Dev writes:

ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੀ ਸਰਬ ਸਧਾਰੀ ਸਫਲ ਦਰਸਨ ਸਹਜਇਆ ॥
ਪੰਨਾ ੫੩੩

“He (God) is generous and benevolent, the beautifier of all, the embodiment of peace; His Blessed Vision is so fruitful”.

Guru Raam Daas is also of the same view and writes:

ਉਪਦੇਸੁ ਕਰੇ ਗੁਰੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਪੂਰਾ
ਗੁਰੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੀਆ ਜੀਉ ॥ ਪੰਨਾ ੯੬

“The Lord, the Perfect True Guru, shares the Teachings. He is Generous to all”.

ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੁ ਪੁੰਨੁ ਬਹੁ ਕੀਆ
ਭਉ ਦੁਤਰੁ ਤਾਰਿ ਪਰਾਢੇ ॥ ਪੰਨਾ ੧੭੧

“He (God) has been so generous and kind to me; He has carried me across the treacherous and terrifying world-ocean”.

In Sikhism, altruism is very important. In Sri Guru Granth Sahib a benevolent person has been admired many times. Guru Raam Daas writes:

ਓਇ ਪੁਰਖ ਪ੍ਰਾਣੀ ਧੰਨਿ ਜਨ ਹਰਿ
ਉਪਦੇਸੁ ਕਰਹਿ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰਿਆ ॥ ਪੰਨਾ ੩੧੧

“Blessed is that mortal being, who shares the teachings for the good of others”.

ਹਰਿ ਜਨ ਉਤਮ ਉਤਮ ਬਾਣੀ
ਮੁਖਿ ਬੋਲਹਿ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੇ ॥ ਪੰਨਾ ੪੯੩

“The humble servants of the Lord are exalted, and exalted is their speech. They speak for the benefit of others”

ਸੰਤਨ ਸੰਤ ਸਾਧ ਮਿਲਿ ਰਹੀਐ
ਗੁਣ ਬੋਲਹਿ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੇ ॥ ਪੰਨਾ ੯੮੩

“Remain with the Holy man, the Saint, who chants the Lord's Praises for the benefit of all”.

Guru Arjan Dev treats a benevolent man as a super human being and writes:

ਜਨਮ ਮਰਣ ਦੁਹਰੂ ਮਹਿ ਨਾਹੀ
ਜਨ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੀ ਆਏ ॥
ਜੀਅ ਦਾਨੁ ਦੇ ਭਗਤੀ ਲਾਇਨਿ
ਹਰਿ ਸਿਉ ਲੈਨਿ ਮਿਲਾਏ ॥ ਪੰਨਾ ੭੪੯

“Those generous, humble beings are above both birth and death. They give the gift of the soul, and practice devotional worship; they inspire others to meet the Lord”.

ਮਿਥਿਆ ਤਨ ਨਹੀ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰਾ ॥ ਪੰਨਾ ੨੬੯

“False is the body which does not do good to others”.

According to Gurbani, a benevolent person should be above enmity, jealousy and greed. He must not consider the demerits of the needy person, rather he should gladly help him to get rid of those defects. In this regard, Guru Arjan Dev says:

ਸਾਜਨੁ ਬੰਧੁ ਸੁਮਿਤੁ ਸੋ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਦੇਇ ॥

ਅਉਗਣ ਸਭਿ ਮਿਟਾਇ ਕੈ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੁ ਕਰੇਇ ॥ ਪੰਨਾ ੨੧੮

“He is a companion, a relative, and a good friend of mine, who implants the Lord's Name within my heart. He washes off all my demerits, and is so generous to me”.

ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰ ਉਮਾਰਾ ॥ ਪੰਨਾ ੨੭੩

“The God-conscious being delights in doing good to others”.

ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੁ ਨਿਤ ਚਿਤਵਤੇ ਨਾਹੀ ਕਛੁ ਪੋਰ ॥ ਪੰਨਾ ੮੧੫

“Those who always think of doing good for others harbor no ill will towards anyone”.

While doing good to a needy person, we should not consider his religion or his country. We should help him as far as we can. In the next quote, Guru Arjan

Dev has explained this point by giving the example of a tree:

ਸਸਤ੍ਰਿ ਤੀਖਣਿ ਕਾਟਿ ਡਾਰਿਓ ਮਨਿ ਨ ਕੀਨੋ ਰੋਸੁ ॥

ਕਾਜੁ ਉਆ ਕੇ ਲੇ ਸਵਾਰਿਓ ਤਿਲੁ ਨ ਦੀਨੋ ਦੋਸੁ ॥ ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੧੮

“A man cuts down the tree with a sharp tool, but the tree does not feel angry. It serves the purpose of the cutter and does not blame him at all”.

Meditation on God is also an act of altruism as it creates divine qualities and doing good deeds becomes the nature of the person who meditates on God. Guru Raam Daas says:

ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰ ਬੋਲਹਿ ਬਹੁ ਗੁਣੀਆ

ਮੁਖਿ ਸੰਤ ਭਗਤ ਹਰਿ ਦੀਜੈ ॥ ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੨੬

“They do good deeds for others, and speak of the Lord's many Glorious Virtues; please bless me to meet these Saints, these devotees of the Lord”.

Guru Arjan Dev also says:

ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕਉ ਸਿਮਰਹਿ ਸੇ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੀ ॥ ਪੰਨਾ ੨੬੩

“Those who remember The Lord help others generously”.

ਹਰਿ ਗੁਨ ਗਾਵਤ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰ ਨਿਤ

ਤਿਸੁ ਰਸਨਾ ਕਾ ਮੋਲੁ ਕਿਛੁ ਨਾਹੀ ॥ ਪੰਨਾ ੮੨੪

“He continually sings the Glorious Praises of the Lord, and always does good for others; his tongue is priceless”.

ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰ ਨ ਕਬਹੂ ਕੀਏ

ਨਹੀ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਸੇਵਿ ਧਿਆਇਓ ॥ ਪੰਨਾ ੭੧੨

“He never does good deeds for others; he does not serve or meditate on the True Guru”.

According to Gurbani, meaning of education is doing good to others. Guru nanak Says:

ਵਿਦਿਆ ਵੀਚਾਰੀ ਤਾਂ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੀ ॥ ਪੰਨਾ ੩੫੬

“Contemplate and reflect upon knowledge, and you will become a benefactor to others”.

Gurbani teaches us to follow the path of altruism. One who believes in Gurbani must be generous and philanthropist. By helping the needy, he should thank the Lord Who enabled him to do so. To be an altruist is a divine gift. To serve mankind is to serve God. Altruism makes our life sacred and useful.

There are many ways to become an altruist: Helping the needy, homeless and disabled persons; taking the needed material to the place where it is needed; teaching the poor weak students without charging them

are acts of altruism. While performing such good deeds, one should keep in mind that only deserving needy persons should be helped. There is no need to help the professional beggars. Guru Nanak has warned us about them:

ਅਭਿਆਗਤ ਏਹਿ ਨ ਆਖੀਅਨਿ

ਜਿ ਪਰ ਘਰਿ ਭੋਜਨੁ ਕਰੇਨਿ ॥

ਉਦਰੈ ਕਾਰਣਿ ਆਪਣੇ

ਬਹਲੇ ਭੋਖਿ ਕਰੇਨਿ ॥ ਪੰਨਾ ੯੪੯

“He is not called a recluse, who takes food in the homes of others. For the sake of his belly, he wears various religious robes”.

WITH FOCUS ON YOUTH AND ETHICS, MANPREET FLOATS NEW PARTY

Sarbjit Dhaliwal & Amarjit Thind

Khatkar Kalan, March 27, 2011

Manpreet Singh Badal has arrived on the political scene of Punjab with a bang as an impressive gathering cheered him at the launch of his new outfit, the People's Party of Punjab (PPP), here on Sunday. The former Finance Minister made an impassioned speech outlining the reasons for floating the party that would strive to fulfill the dreams of Shaheed Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev, amid slogans and shouts of approval by a responsive and attentive gathering. The focus was on creating more job opportunities for the youth, curbing drug abuse, transparent governance and bailing the state out of financial bankruptcy, he said.



Visibly moved by the response from the masses, Manpreet said Punjab was in dire straits and there was an urgent need to follow the path shown by the martyrs to instill a hope of a better future in the next generation. "This soil is beseeching for its due and we have to give it if we want to live in a peaceful and progressive Punjab in the future," he added.

"We have come here today to seek the courage, vision and sense of selflessness espoused by Bhagat Singh whose sacrifice not only shook the foundations of the British empire but eclipsed it," said Manpreet. Without blaming any political party for the "sorry state of affairs", he said the situation is so bad that it is a sin to be born in Punjab. "Every child is born with a noose of debt which tightens as he grows up. Is this the Punjab that Bhagat Singh envisioned and happily went to the gallows for?" he questioned.

He also castigated the lavish lifestyles of the politicians and the babus at the cost of the exchequer. "They believe that they are the new rulers who have the right to oppress the masses. Politicians are not only usurping the rights of the people but also their properties, lands and other vital resources of the state. See the plight of the NRIs who have to run from pillar to post to get justice," said Manpreet. The ex-Finance Minister said the need of the hour was to stop taking debt from the Centre. "We can eat less but will have to say a firm no to more debt. If this means taking some unpalatable decisions, so be it," he said.

In an apparent dig at the ruling coalition, he said no one can stop the birth of an idea or a movement whose time has come. "And the time has come for the rule of the law and not of one person or a family," he asserted. In an obvious reference to the Congress, he said the grand old party has been saying they will eradicate poverty from the country but the truth is that the day this happens it would be their last day.

Earlier, he declared that Abhey Singh Sandhu and Bharat Bhushan Thapar, nephews of Bhagat Singh and Sukhdev, respectively, would be his party's candidates for any seat they choose to contest from the state.

Raising the bar for other political parties, he also announced a retirement age of 70 years for leaders and said no member could hold a position of office in any capacity for more than 10 years. Stamping out

nepotism, he said no member could hold office if his/her kin already holds such a post. The party would also give proper representation to women, youth and minorities at all levels, he added. Another salient feature would be a 'Corp of Volunteers' willing to work for social and humanitarian causes and would be at the disposal of the party at times of natural calamities, literacy and health camps.

Others who spoke at the gathering were Jagbir Brar and Manjinder Kang, both MLAs, Kushaldeep Singh, satirist Bhagwant Mann, Abhey Sandhu and Bharat Bhushan Thapar.

PPP — A PARTY FOR PUNJAB, PUNJABI AND PUNJABIAT

Sarbjit Dhaliwal /TNS
Jalandhar. March 27, 2011

Punjabi nationalism as well as the Indian nationalism are the heart and soul of the new People's Party of Punjab (PPP) launched by Manpreet Singh Badal today. In fact, he has maintained a fine balance between the Indian nationalism and regionalism that makes his party a different entity from the other regional parties.

Regarding aims and objectives the PPP, Manpreet has stated that it would be committed to the concept of India being a sovereign, a socialist, a secular, a federal and a democratic Republic. Along with it, he has also stated that the party would be committed to the glory of the Punjab, Punjabi and Punjabi, that abundantly reflects about the Punjabi nationalism. Focusing on the Punjabi nationalism, he has remarked that the PPP would act as a vanguard both for Punjab and its people and would ensure that Punjab and Punjabis get their rightful due in the national polity, administration and financial affairs.

Manpreet is clear about the political line and philosophy of his party. In statutory declaration of his party, he has clearly stated that the PPP shall bear faith and allegiance to the constitution of India and to the principles of socialism, secularism and democracy and would uphold the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India. The party will not, in any manner, promote or instigate or participate in violence.

Explaining the agenda of his party, Manpreet said,

“One man or one family rule is antithetical to the idea of democracy.” The party constitution details the checks and balances provided to prevent domination by one individual and clan. He further said, “Hero worship and one-man rule have to be prevented in every possible way. No new public scheme or project would be launched in the name of a party leader or someone who is part of a family of a member of the party”.

Manpreet has come out with some novel ideas. For instance, he talks about evaluating the performance of ministers by a secret ballot in the Vidhan Sabha. He is for fully empowering zila parishads and block samities and is for a drastic cut on the government expenditure. He is especially against personal expenditure of ministers, bureaucrats and other members of the government.

His other agendas include revenue augmentation, targeted subsidies, new lease of life for agriculture, industrial investment and job creation.

AMERICAN GURDWARA PARBANDHAK COMMITTEE

&

AUSTRALIAN SIKH GURDWARA PARBANDHAK COMMITTEE

SIKH COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA INC

170 Ninth Avenue Austral N.S.W 2179

Dear members of the Sikh community,

For the last couple of days I have been inundated by emails and telephone calls from concerned Sikhs and am sure you must be getting these emails about the “**Australian Sikh Gurudwara Parbhandak Committee**”, which has become a source of concern for the Sikhs in Australia and is further polarizing the community.

It all started by someone called Dr. Pritpal Singh from United States who claims to be the coordinator of “American Gurudwara Parbhandak Committee”. He also issued a press release, on behalf of the so called ASGPC, whose whereabouts are unknown, in some of the Indian News Papers stating that, “**20 leading Sikh management Gurudwara committees in Australia**

have decided to form ASGPC during a meeting held in Gurudwara Revesby on Saturday”. He further says that Sikhs in Canada and Germany have already setup such Gurudwara Management Committees.

Having failed to find as to who this Dr. Pritpal Singh is, his email address, religious, social, theological and political (Gurudwara) credentials, I decided to find straight, as they say, “from the horse’s mouth”. I was able to get the name and telephone number of the secretary of the AGPC. Mr. Bhajan Singh Bhinder is the newly appointed secretary of the so called American Gurudwara Parbhandak Committee in the United States and I rang him up to ask a few questions about Dr. Pritpal Singh, his motives and about the AGPC. Having talked to Mr. Bhajan Singh Bhinder, who is a very fine and honest person, is concerned about the Sikhs and the motives of various such Sikh organisations springing up every now and then, I then talked to few others in the USA about Dr. Pritpal Singh and his AGPC.

The facts, as I have been told and confirmed by other independent sources are:

1. No such Gurudwara Parbhandak Committees exist in Canada or in Germany as Dr. Pritpal Singh claims.
2. Dr. Pritpal Singh’s American Gurudwara Parbhandak Committee **does not legally exist**, it is not a registered Organisation in the USA and hence it is not a legal entity. As we have here in Australia numerous “One man Associations” or “Family Associations” established by a few friends to get grants from the government, facilitate sponsorship and arrange trips of these Sant Babas, (they of course are registered) the AGPC falls into one of these categories but it is not a registered body. Even Google confirms that no organisation such as AGPC exists.
3. Although it has nothing to do with what Dr. Pritpal Singh is doing, yet I was told that Dr. Pritpal Singh doesn’t hold a Medical or research degree or a degree in theology. Then who is he and why is he so sympathetic and worried about the Managements of Gurudwara in Australia, which are all independent any

way, and what is his motive behind splitting the already disjointed community and why would he come all the way from the United States, where he couldn't get his own so called AGPC legally registered, to establish ASGPC here in Australia where the "Organisations Market" is so chokingly flooded with the names of such Committees and Organisations that people find it hard to find a name to register a new organisation?

Could the Executive of Revesby Gurudwara, where Dr. Pritpal Singh held the meeting, tell us his email address so that the people could ask him?

1. The names of the 20 leading Gurudwara Committees who agreed to form the ASGPC. The fact that the feedback which the Sikh Council is getting from its State Representatives is that nobody approached them for the establishment of any such Committee. Advisors of Dr. Pritpal Singh forgot that, leaving aside the Sikh Associations which are not Gurudwaras, there are only 19 Gurudwaras and not 20 in whole of Australia
2. Who authorised him and the motive behind making false press statement to the Indian News papers.
3. What is the motive behind establishing ASGPC and what does he want to achieve by misleading the Sikh community. Does he think that Australian Sikhs were born yesterday and cannot think for themselves what is right for them and want a foreign advisor.
4. One can only expect such statements and actions from an impractical dreamer who is suffering from self- image and imagined greatness.

Sikh Council has written to the World Sikh Council - American Region about this person and the issue and is awaiting a reply from the World Sikh Council-American Region.

With kind regards,
Yours sincerely,
Bawa Singh Jagdev
Secretary

For and on behalf of the Sikh Council of Australia

From: bawaj@optusnet.com.au
To: secretary@sydneysikhs.com
CC: ajmersinghgill@gmail.com

Subject: ASGPC

Date: Tue, 26 Apr 2011 12:13:04 +1000

From:
Sikh Council Of Australia Inc
170- Ninth Avenue Austral N.S.W 2179
Inc. No: INC9877869
Web: <http://www.sikhcouncil.org.au>

To:
S. Swarn Singh
Secretary, Sri Guru Singh Sabha.
secretary@sydneysikhs.com

Dear Mr. Swarn Singh,

Over the past few weeks numerous emails have been going around regarding the press statements made by someone called Dr. Pritpal Singh, coordinator of *American Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee* which appeared in one of our local news papers and in some of the Indian News papers about a meeting held at Revesby with the Revesby Gurudwara Executive attended by 20 other representatives of the leading Gurudwaras in Australia and established the so called *Australian Sikh Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee*.

As you are aware that Sikh Council of Australia is the peak representative body of the Sikhs in Australia, and most of the Sikh Associations and Gurudwaras are its members, 25 to be exact, please visit its website www.sikhcouncil.org.au to see what the SCA has done for the Sikhs in Australia. Because of the said press release the Sikh Council has been inundated by calls and emails from its members about this misleading information in the news papers about the 20 attendees at the said meeting and they repudiate claim having attended any such meeting or agreed to the formation of ASGPC.

Members have asked for the clarification of the misleading press release by Dr. Pritpal Singh and Sikh Council would appreciate if you email copy of the minutes of the said meeting, which you should have,

showing the **names of the 20 leading representatives of the Gurudwaras in Australia** and the motions passed at the meeting so that the Council can remove any misunderstanding about the press release.

With kind regards,
Yours sincerely
Bawa Singh Jagdev
For and on behalf of the Sikh Council of Australia.

PS:- Copy of the business card of Dr. Pritpal Singh, sent to the Council by a well wisher, reads “ Pritpal Singh Coordinator AGPC” and not Dr. Pritpal Singh Coordinator AGPC. May be he forgot to update his business card.

SIKH COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA INC

170- Ninth Avenue Austral N.S.W 2179

Friday, April 29, 2011 7:46AM

Dear S. Swarn Singh,

For an Association to function properly, and to serve the purpose for which it has been established, transparency of actions and honesty of purpose of its office bearers are of paramount importance, without which they lose their confidence in its members and their ability to perform comes to close.

At the calls from our members I have written you two emails asking to confirm or deny the authenticity of the facts in the press release by your foreign advisor Dr. Pritpal Singh, about the newly formed Association (ASGPC) of which you been elected the secretary, which appeared in the local and Indian news papers. I am concerned and very much disappointed that you have elected not to answer the questions I had raised. Our members do want to know the truth about it so please note that if I did not receive any reply from you to the questions I had raised and the minutes of the said meeting, within the next two days, **I shall have no alternative but to inform our members that the formation of the ASGPC and the press statement about it, by Dr. Pritpal Singh, was a hoax.**

With kind regards
Yours sincerely
Bawa Singh Jagdev, Secretary,
For and on behalf of the Sikh Council of Australia

[We had advised S. Bawa Singh Jagdev that we will delay the release of this issue of The Sikh Bulletin until 3:00PM, Sunday, May 1, 2011 Australian Time. There has been no response and we did not expect one either. ED.]

[It is a strange coincidence that “Dr.” Pritpal Singh and “Dr.” Amarjit Singh (See below) are in the news at the same time. On September 12, 2002 we, at the Sikh Bulletin, had written letters to three “controversial” Sikh leaders, Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, “Dr.” Amarjit Singh, and Atty. Gurcharanjit Singh Lamba. We are sorry to have missed “Dr.” Pritpal Singh; at that time he had not come to our attention. The letters we wrote to three of them and the only response we got, from Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, are reproduced from The Sikh Bulletin issue of January 2003 pp.22-24, following Dr. Awatar Singh Sekhon’s email to “Dr.” Amarjit Singh below. We have since learned that both “Dr.” Amarjit Singh and “Dr.” Pritpal Singh may have been class mates at an Ayurvedic school in Jalandhar and both appear to have come to the States at about the same time. Should they wish to introduce themselves to the Sikh Diaspora we will be more than pleased to publish their submissions about themselves. ED.]

“DR.” AMARJIT SINGH

C-<kacwashdc@yahoo.com>

April 28, 2011

Bhai Amarjit Singh ji,

Good Day!

Regretfully, I have to say that you 'do not' deserve to use the prefix 'Dr' before your name unless you answer the following questions, even asked before several times. It becomes necessary for you since you have started using <kartarpur@yahoogroups.com>, in addition to your own space in the Charhdikala weekly, published from Vancouver, B C, Canada:

1. What degree do you have which entitles you to use the **prefix of Dr** before your name. Please make it clear once and for all whether you are a Ph D, MD, D Litt, D Law, DVM or what?

Which institution/university/country granted and entitled you to use the prefix of 'Dr'?

2. Clear it absolutely about (i) **your father's name**, (ii) **mother's name**, (iii) **village, town or city of your birth**, i. e., **your birthplace**, (iv) **family name**, etc.

3. What is the 'status of your living in the United States of America, although your name first surfaced in the Canadian weekly newspapers as the **'Spokesman/spokesperson, Panthic Committee of Dr Sohan Singh (Boparai), who is now living in Chandigarh, PUNJAB (called Union Territory)'**?

4. I believe we first met face to face, when you were coming from the **World Sikh Organization (now closed)**, Washington, DC, with your friend Rajwant Singh, a Dentist by profession. At this time, **we met before or near the Press Club Building, if you recall.**

5. Please correct me if I am wrong that Dr Sohan Singh, the then Chairman, Panthic Committee of **Dr Sohan Singh had asked you 'who appointed the Spokesperson of the Panthic Committee'**? I believe this information had been published in Indo-Canadian Times of the British Columbia, while Sardar Tara Singh Hayer was alive.

6. Until you clarify the above, **no one cares what you publish and/or write** under the name of [Dr] Bhai Amarjit Singh.

7. Would you **clarify** whether your entry to Canada has been bared/denied? If so, under what reasons.

8. In the title **'Open Secrets'** authored by an agent of Research and Analysis, Diplomat of the alleged Indian democracy, and may be the Acting/High Commissioner of India to Canada, **Maloy K Dhar (now retired)**, writes in his book that **"Dr Sohan Singh was closely associated with the Government of 'Brahmins-Hindus' alleged Indian democracy?** According to Dhar, Dr Sohan Singh was close to the New Delhi administration of the Government of India and Dr Singh appointed you the Spokesman of his *Panthic* Committee, would you explain what was or has been your relationship with the then Chief, Panthic Committee (of Dr Sohan Singh), asks the writer?

Unless you, Bhai Amarjit Singh, you come out with answers to the above questions, your writing of 'Three articles', editorials, speaking before the *Guru-di-Sangat* in Gurdwaras **have no meaning**, Bhai Amarjit Singh ji.

Further, we all have to work or had been working before retirements, pay out 'tax' to the country we live

in, it would be nothing inadequate to ask you (i) what is your employment, (ii) who is your employer, (iii) what is your business for living **if you do not have an employer(s)**, what is your permanent address, if you wish to care about the information requested to you to furnish. Your countrymen, and the *Guru-di-Sangat* would appreciate hearing from you.

Charhdikala, Bhai Amarjit Singh.

Yours,

Awatar Singh Sekhon (Machaki), Ph D, FIBA, RM (CCM)
Associate Professor (Retired), Medical Microbiology and Immunology
Director (Former), National Centre for Human Mycotic Diseases CANADA
Editor in Chief
International Journal of Sikh Affairs ISSN 1481-5435

LETTERS TO 'CONTROVERSIAL' SIKH LEADERS

[From The Sikh Bulletin, January 2003]

[On September 12, 2002 we wrote to **Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh**, Council of Khalistan and **"Dr." Amarjit Singh**, Khalistan Affairs Centre, both in Washington, D.C. and **S. Gurcharanjit Singh Lamba**, Attorney in Jalandhar. We asked all three to send us a brief autobiographical sketch so that our readers might know better the people actively involved in Sikh affairs. ED.]

To Dr. Aulakh we wrote:

"One thing that has always puzzled me is the presence in Washington, DC of two Khalistan offices, yours and "Dr." (?) Amarjit Singh's. From your question mark against his name and the contents of your comments it would appear that you two do not see eye to eye nor do you know each other. I have often asked other knowledgeable people questions about this and about what Amarjit Singh is Dr. of. But even those who have asked him this question personally did not get any answer."

To "Dr." Amarjit Singh we wrote

"One thing that has always puzzled me is the presence in Washington, DC of two Khalistan offices, yours and Dr. Aulakh's. After reading Dr. Aulakh's comments it

appears that the two of you do not even know each other. Even he does not know what you are Dr. of. As a matter of fact of all the people I have inquired about you and Dr. Aulakh they all seemed to know a lot about him but nothing about you”

To S. Gurcharanjit Singh Lamba we wrote:

As per your e-mail request we are sending some issues of the SB and we have placed you on our mailing list. Since you are very actively involved in Sikh affairs, we would like to know you better. Would you be kind enough to e-mail to us about one page (or longer) autobiographical sketch on yourself for publication in The Sikh Bulletin?

The only person who chose to respond to our request was Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh. We thank him and publish his response below:

**DR. GURMIT SINGH AULAKH, PRESIDENT
COUNCIL OF KHALISTAN**

Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh emigrated from Punjab, India in 1965 to further his education in the United Kingdom. In 1970, leaving his teaching post in Scotland, he came to America in order to pursue a Ph.D. in molecular genetics in the United States which he received from Harvard University in 1973. Dr. Aulakh's research is well recognized among the international scientific community. In 1979, he was appointed a special expert at the National Institute of Health in the Laboratory of Oral Medicine. Because of his unique and distinguished work, Dr. Aulakh was honored with American citizenship in order that he continues his pioneering research in the United States.

The author of over 25 scientific papers and chapters in books in the field of recombinant DNA, Dr. Aulakh, in the 1977 Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, showed unequivocal evidence of the footprints of viral genetic material in human cancer tissue which was absent in normal tissue of the same person. His discovery was done in collaboration with Dr. Robert Gallo of the National Cancer Institute, who is credited with the isolation of the AIDS virus.

At the time of the Indian Government's attack on the Golden Temple, Dr. Aulakh along with 20 million Sikhs worldwide felt a deep sense of betrayal and

urgency. As a result, he left his prominent position as a Research Scientist at Harvard in order to lend a hand in the Sikh Nation's struggle for freedom. By educating both the American people and the international community about the Indian government's policy of brutality and genocide against the Sikhs, Dr. Aulakh has emerged as a leader among Sikhs and a spokesman for their legitimate demands for human rights through a free and sovereign Khalistan.

On October 7, 1987 the Sikh people declared independence from India, establishing the separate, sovereign country of Khalistan. The same day, Dr. Aulakh was appointed by the Panthic Committee as President of the Council of Khalistan, bestowing upon him the responsibility of pursuing the interests of Sikhs worldwide and the advancement of the struggle for a free and sovereign Khalistan. As President of the Council of Khalistan, not only does Dr. Aulakh have the overwhelming task of refuting Indian Government propaganda which brands any politically active Sikh as a terrorist, but he must also bring to bear international attention and pressure on the Indian government to allow the Sikhs to be free.

The work of the Council of Khalistan takes on even greater importance when one realizes that the political voice of Sikhs within Khalistan has been brutally silenced by India's police and security forces. The Indian Government has total control over the radio and television waves and they have used rigorous censorship to control independent newspapers throughout India. Even Amnesty International has been continuously denied entry to India over the past eighteen years.

Fortunately, Dr. Aulakh has led a persistent and tireless campaign to inform Members of the US Congress of the worsening situation plaguing his homeland. Having access to domestic human rights groups within India and the Sikh leadership in Punjab, he is privy to information, which not only reveals the truth of the situation there, but also directly contradicts claims made by the Indian government and its agents.

On May 22, 1991 Dr. Aulakh appeared on CNN to explain the Sikh reaction to the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi. This was aired throughout the world in 128 countries. On May 28, 1991 Dr. Aulakh appeared as

the guest speaker for the Morning Newsmaker program at the National Press Club, which was aired five times throughout the U.S. on C-Span. On June 25, 1992, Dr. Aulakh helped secure a major victory for the Sikh freedom movement with the passage of the **Burton Amendment to the foreign aid package. The House of Representatives voted 219 to 200 to cut off 24 million dollars in U.S. developmental aid to India to protest India's violation of human rights against the Sikhs and Kashmiris.**

Here are his comments about Amarjit Singh:

The **Sikh Youth of America** invited me last year at the house of **Jaswinder Singh Jandi** to have a meeting with me. **Jasjit Singh, Gurtej Singh, Bhajan Singh Bhinder, and Jaswinder Singh Jandi** held a meeting with me and told me that Amarjit Singh was planted in the Sikh Youth of America by the Indian Government. They told me that they were my supporters and want to support me again. I told them it is perfectly OK. How can these Sikh Youth of America leaders back out from their own statement?

This office has been very successful in exposing the atrocities committed by the Indian government on the Sikhs internationally and has internationalized our struggle for independence of Khalistan. *Indian government is changing the Sikh history (Please see the Editorial and the articles that follow it in this issue pp.1 7.ED)* and we have preserved our history since 1984 by documenting it in the Congressional Record. All Gurdwaras in the United States, Canada, England, and other European countries are on my mailing list. They are aware of the work done by this office.

At the same time, they are also aware that **Sikh Youth belongs to the Panthic Committee of Dr. Sohan Singh. They were supporters of Dr. Sohan Singh for long time. When Sohan Singh reached India and was exposed as agent of the Indian government his Panthic Committee did not explain to the Khalsa Panth his betrayal.**

It is "Dr." (?) **Amarjit Singh** who opened an office in Washington since early 90s. Can he tell the Sikh Nation what he has accomplished in Washington during last 10 years since he opened this office? Is the Sikh Youth so blind they do not have the courage or intelligence to ask Amarjit Singh what does he do in

Washington? He is rarely in Washington office and the office does not open. They are wasting Khalsa Panth's money by paying rent every month. This money should be saved and this empty office should be closed. This is a fraud with the Sikh Nation. *Also remember, it is the same Sikh Youth who held a parallel convention to Council of Khalistan in Fremont two years ago and invited Gurcharan Singh Tohra and other Akali leaders who have betrayed the Khalsa Panth and are agents of the Indian government.*

Khalsa Ji, this Dr. Amarjit Singh has not told the Khalsa Panth who he is, where he is from, and who are his parents. There is something he is hiding from the Khalsa Panth and the members of the **Sikh Youth are conniving with him** and are guilty of the betrayal of the Khalsa Panth.

According to recent intelligence reports, there are 25,000 agents of Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) outside India. **These agents have infiltrated our Gurdwaras and Sikh organizations** and are working against our struggle for independence of Khalistan. There are over 50,000 Sikhs rotting in Indian jails according to the statement by the Movement Against State Repression (MASR) under TADA. Can the **Sikh Youth of America** tell the Sikh Nation what they are doing for their release? On February 28 this year (2002), this office persuaded 42 Members of Congress to write to President Bush for the release of these political prisoners.

This office has served the Sikh Nation since its inception. I always stood for the liberation of Khalistan consistently and have worked to stop human rights violations against the Sikhs by the Indian government. This office is running with your support. We request your continued support morally, and financially. Please get involved politically at the local level. May Guru give wisdom to these Sikhs to see that it is in our interests to support this office, not to oppose it.

[Neither Dr. (?) Amarjit Singh nor S. Gurbachan Singh Lamba has responded to our request to tell us just who they are. Readers may draw their own conclusions. If any reader has verifiable information about them, we would appreciate receiving it. ED]

ਗੋਤ

ਗੁਰਬਚਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਿੱਧੂ ਐਮ.ਏ, ਨੌਟਿੰਘਮ (ਇੰਗਲੈਂਡ)

ਅਪੰਗ ਵਿਅਕਤੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਕੈਂਪ ਲਗਵਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਮੇਰਾ ਚੱਕਰ ਹਰ ਸਾਲ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦਾ ਲਗਦਾ ਹੀ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਪਿਛਲੇ ਸਾਲ ਦੇ ਚੱਕਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਚਾਨਕ ਇੱਕ 1000 ਰੁਪੈ ਦਾ ਜਾਲੀ ਨੋਟ ਇੱਧਰੋਂ ਉੱਧਰੋਂ ਮੇਰੇ ਕੋਲ ਆ ਗਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਕੁੱਝ ਘਬਰਾਹਟ ਜਿਹੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਮੈਂ ਇੱਕ ਗੁਰਮੁਖ ਵੀਰ ਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਦੱਸਿਆ। ਉਹ ਹੱਸ ਕੇ ਕਹਿਣ ਲਗੇ "ਕੋਈ ਫਿਕਰ ਨਾ ਕਰੋ ਚੱਲ ਜਾਏਗਾ, ਇੱਥੇ ਅਸਲੀ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਨਕਲੀ ਨੋਟ ਵਧੇਰੇ ਚਲਦੇ ਹਨ"। ਅੱਜ ਇਹੋ ਹਾਲ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਦਾ ਹੈ। ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਦੀ ਅਸਲੀ ਨੁਹਾਰ ਹੀ ਵਿਗਾੜ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ। ਹਰ ਕੋਈ ਆਪਣੀ ਮਨਮਤ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰਮਤ ਬਣਾ ਕੇ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਨਾਲ ਜੋੜੀ ਤੁਰਿਆ ਜਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਕੰਮ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਡੇ ਸਾਧਾਂ ਸੰਤਾਂ ਨੇ ਤਾਂ ਕਸਮ ਹੀ ਖਾ ਲਈ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਦਾ ਮੂੰਹ ਮੁਹਾਂਦਰਾ ਰਹਿਣ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਦੇਣਾ। ਗੁਰੂ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਲਖ ਕਰੇ "ਇਕਾ ਬਾਣੀ ਇੱਕੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਇਕੋ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਵੀਚਾਰਿ" (ਪੰਨਾ 646) ਪਰ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਹਮੇਸ਼ਾ ਆਪਣੀ ਹੀ ਡਫਲੀ ਬਜਾਉਣੀ ਹੋਈ। ਹਰ ਸੰਤ ਦੀ ਮਰਯਾਦਾ ਵਖਰੀ, ਜੱਥੇ ਵਖਰੇ, ਅਤੇ ਗੁਰਦਵਾਰੇ ਵੱਖਰੇ ਬਣ ਗਏ ਹਨ। **ਘਰ ਘਰ ਹੋਏ ਬਹੋਗੇ ਰਾਮਾ, ਤਿਨ ਤੇ ਸਰੇ ਨਾ ਕੋਊ ਕਾਮਾ**" ਵਾਲੀ ਸਥਿਤੀ ਬਣ ਗਈ ਹੈ। ਇਕ ਸਮੇਂ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੇ ਇਹ ਵੀ ਲਿਖ ਮਾਰਿਆ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਟਮਾਟਰ ਖਾਣਾ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਵਿੱਚ ਵਿਵਰਜਿਤ ਹੈ। ਪਿੱਛੇ ਜਿਹੇ ਇਕ ਬੀ ਜੇ ਪੀ ਦਾ ਅਧਿਕਾਰੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਆਇਆ ਤਾਂ ਕਹਿ ਗਿਆ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਕੇ ਲੰਗਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਲਸਣ ਅਤੇ ਪਿਆਜ਼ ਦੀ ਵਰਤੋਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਅਨੁਸਾਰੀ ਨਹੀਂ। ਹੁਣੇ ਹੁਣੇ ਕੁਝ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੇ "ਗੋਤ" ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਨਾਲ ਜੋੜ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਆਪਣੇ ਨਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਗੋਤ ਦੀ ਵਰਤੋਂ ਕਰਨਾ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਵਿੱਚ ਮਿਲਾਵਟ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਨਿਰੀ ਖੋਟ ਹੈ।

ਗੋਤ ਦਾ ਅਰਥ ਕੁਲ, ਵੰਸ਼, ਖਾਨਦਾਨ ਜਾਂ ਕਬੀਲਾ ਹੈ। ਕਿਸੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਸਾਡੇ ਬਜ਼ੁਰਗ ਕਬੀਲਿਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੰਡੇ ਹੋਏ ਸਨ ਅਤੇ ਕਬੀਲੇ ਦੇ ਵਡੇਰੇ ਦੇ ਨਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਜਾਣੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਸਨ। ਜਿਵੇਂ ਸਿੱਧੂਆਂ ਦਾ ਵਡੇਰਾ ਖੀਵਾ ਰਾਉ ਦਾ ਪੁੱਤ੍ਰ ਸਿੱਧੂ ਸੀ ਜਿਸ ਦਾ ਜਨਮ 1250 ਈ: ਵਿੱਚ ਹੋਇਆ। ਉਸ ਦਾ ਸਾਰਾ ਕਬੀਲਾ ਸਿੱਧੂ ਅਖਵਾਇਆ (ਦੇਖੋ ਇਬਟਸਨ ਦੀ ਪੁਸਤਕ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਕਾਸਟਸ ਪੰਨਾ 122)। ਇੱਥੇ ਕੁਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਪਿਛੋਂ ਹਮੀਰੇ ਦਾ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਬਰਾੜ ਜੰਮਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਨਾਂ ਤੇ ਬਰਾੜ ਗੋਤ ਚੱਲ ਪਿਆ। ਅਜਿਹੇ ਕਬੀਲਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਹਰ ਜਾਤੀ ਦੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਸੀ। ਇਹੋ ਕਾਰਨ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇੱਕੋ ਗੋਤ ਦੇ ਲੋਕ ਹਿੰਦੂਆਂ, ਸਿੱਖਾਂ, ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨਾਂ, ਅਤੇ ਅਖਾਉਤੀ ਅਨੁਸੂਚਿਤ ਜਾਤਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਮਿਲ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਸਿੱਧੂ ਮਜ਼ਹਬੀ ਵੀ ਹਨ, ਜੱਟ ਵੀ, ਚਮਾਰ ਵੀ, ਬਲਕਿ ਕੁਝ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਜਾਟ ਵੀ ਸਿੱਧੂ ਹਨ। ਇਹੋ ਹਾਲ ਬਾਕੀ ਗੋਤਾਂ ਦਾ ਹੈ। ਢਿੱਲੋਂ ਅਤੇ ਚੀਮੇ ਜੱਟ ਵੀ ਹਨ, ਤਰਖਾਣ ਵੀ ਅਤੇ ਨਾਈ ਵੀ। ਗਿੱਲ ਅਤੇ ਮਾਨ ਗੋਤ ਤਾਂ ਅੰਗ੍ਰੇਜ਼ਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਆਮ ਹਨ। ਸੋ ਗੋਤ ਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਜਾਤ ਜਾਂ ਕੌਮ ਨਾਲ ਜੋੜਨਾ ਕਿਸੇ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਵੀ ਉਚਿਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ (ਜਾਤ ਨਜਾਤਿ ਦੇਖਿ ਮਤ ਭਰਮਹੁ ਸੁਕ ਜਨਕ ਪਗੀਂ ਲਗਿ ਧਿਆਵੈਗੋ" (ਪੰਨਾ 1309)।

ਗੋਤ ਦਾ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ "ਉਪਜਾਤੀ" ਜਾਂ Subcaste ਕਰਨਾ ਬਿਲਕੁਲ ਗ਼ਲਤ ਹੈ। ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਵੀ ਇੱਕ ਕਬੀਲੇ ਜਾਂ ਵੰਸ਼ ਵਾਂਗ ਹੀ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਹੋਇਆ ਜਿਸ ਦੇ ਮੌਢੀ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਸਨ ਅਤੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਂ ਤੇ ਇਸ ਕਬੀਲੇ ਦੇ ਉਤ੍ਰਾਪਿਕਾਰੀ ਆਪਣੀਆਂ ਰਚਨਾਵਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਿਖਦੇ ਰਹੇ ਅਤੇ ਕਈ ਨਾਨਕ ਪੰਥੀ ਵੀ ਅਖਵਾਏ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਇਸ

ਉਤਕ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟ ਕਬੀਲੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਾਤ ਗੋਤ ਤੋਂ ਉੱਪਰ ਉੱਠ ਕੇ ਕਬੀਰ, ਭੀਖਣ ਅਤੇ ਨਾਮਦੇਵ ਵਰਗੇ ਭਗਤ ਵੀ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਕਰ ਲਏ ਗਏ। ਇਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ "ਮਨਸੁਖਾਨੀ" ਉਹ ਹਨ ਜੋ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਨਿਕਟਵਰਤੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਭਾਈ ਮਨਸੁਖ ਦੀ ਔਲਾਦ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਜਾਂ ਕਬੀਲੇ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਹਨ।

ਕੁਝ ਗੋਤ ਕੰਮਾਂ ਪੰਦਿਆ ਜਾਂ ਵਪਾਰ ਜਾਂ ਗੁਣਾਂ/ਔਗਣਾਂ ਆਦਿਕ ਕਾਰਨ ਵੀ ਹੋਂਦ ਵਿੱਚ ਆਏ। ਕਿਸੇ ਮੌਕੇ ਸਰਾਬ ਕੱਢਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਨੂੰ "ਕਲਾਲ" ਕਿਹਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ। ਸਰਦਾਰ ਜੱਸਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਆਹਲੂਵਾਲੀਆ ਦਾ ਗੋਤ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਪਿੰਡ "ਆਹਲੂਵਾਲ" ਤੋਂ ਆਹਲੂਵਾਲੀਆ ਬਣ ਗਿਆ ਪਰ ਜਾਤ "ਕਲਾਲ" ਹੀ ਰਹੀ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਖੁਦ ਆਪਣੇ ਸਿੱਕੇ ਤੇ ਲਿਖਵਾਇਆ "ਸਿੱਕਾ ਜਦ ਦਰ ਜਹਾਂ ਬਫਜਲੇ ਅਕਾਲ, ਮੁਲਕ-ਏ-ਅਹਿਮਦ ਗਰਿਫਤ ਜੱਸਾ ਕਲਾਲ"। "ਚਾਵਲੇ" ਚੌਲਾਂ (ਚਾਵਲਾਂ) ਦਾ ਵਪਾਰ ਕਰਦੇ ਸਨ। ਲੁਬਾਣੇ "ਲੂਣ" ਵੇਚਦੇ ਸਨ। ਭਾਵੇਂ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਕਿੱਤੇ ਵਖਰੇ ਸਨ ਪਰ ਸਿੱਖ ਪੰਥ ਵਿੱਚ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕਿੱਤੇ ਕਾਰਨ ਕਿਸੇ ਗੱਲੋਂ ਵੀ ਦੂਸਰਿਆਂ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਘਟੀਆ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਸਮਝਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ। ਹਰੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਲੂਆ ਨੂੰ ਨਲੂਆ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਗੋਤ ਕਰਕੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੇਵਲ ਖਾਲੀ ਹਥੀਂ ਸ਼ੇਰ ਮਾਰਨ ਕਰਕੇ ਨਲੂਆ ਕਿਹਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ।

ਕਈ ਕਬੀਲਿਆਂ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਪਿੰਡ ਵਸਾ ਲਏ ਸਨ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਸਿੱਧੂਆਂ ਦੇ ਪਿੰਡ "ਸਿਧਵਾਂ", ਕੰਗ ਗੋਤ ਦੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦਾ ਪਿੰਡ "ਕੰਗ"। "ਮਾਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਕਈ ਪਿੰਡ ਵਸਾਏ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਂ ਵੀ "ਮਾਨ" ਜਾਂ "ਮਾਨਾ ਵਾਲਾ" ਹਨ। ਸਿਵੀਆਂ, ਬਸੀਆਂ, ਲਲੀਆਂ, ਸੋਹੀਆਂ, ਕੁਲਾਰ, ਵਿਰਕ, ਢਿਲਵਾਂ, ਹੇਅਰ ਆਦਿਕ ਇਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਸੇ ਪਿੰਡ ਹਨ। ਅੱਜ ਕਲ੍ਹ ਕਈ ਲੋਕ ਆਪਣੇ ਨਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਗੋਤ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਪਿੰਡ ਦਾ ਨਾਂ ਲਿਖਣ ਲੱਗ ਪਏ ਹਨ। ਪ੍ਰਤਾਪ ਸਿੰਘ "ਕੈਰੋ" ਦਾ ਗੋਤ "ਢਿਲੋਂ" ਸੀ ਪਰ ਅਜ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਸਾਰੀ ਔਲਾਦ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ "ਕੈਰੋ" ਲਿਖਦੇ ਹਨ। ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਾਦਲ ਦਾ ਗੋਤ "ਧਾਲੀਵਾਲ" ਹੈ "ਬਾਦਲ" ਨਹੀਂ। ਬਾਦਲ ਉਸ ਦਾ ਪਿੰਡ ਹੈ। ਹੌਲੀ ਹੌਲੀ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਰੁਚੀ ਵੀ ਅੰਤ ਵਿੱਚ ਗੋਤਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਬਦਲ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ।

ਇੱਕੋ ਗੋਤ ਵਿੱਚ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੋਏ ਬੱਚੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਭੈਣ ਭਰਾ ਸਮਝਦੇ ਸਨ ਅਤੇ ਆਪਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਵਿਆਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਰਚਾਉਂਦੇ ਸਨ। ਦੂਸਰੇ ਗੋਤ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਆਈ ਲੜਕੀ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਗੋਤ ਵਿੱਚ ਰਲਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਇਕ ਖਾਸ ਰਸਮ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਸੀ ਜਿਸ ਨੂੰ "ਗੋਤ ਕੁਨਾਲਾ" ਕਿਹਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ। ਨਵੀਂ ਵਿਆਹੀ ਲੜਕੀ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਨਾਲ ਬਿਠਾ ਕੇ ਬਗੈਰ ਭਿੰਨ ਭੇਦ ਇੱਕੋ ਕੁਨਾਲੀ (ਭਾਂਡੇ) ਵਿੱਚ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਾ ਛਕਾਇਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ। ਗੋਤ ਕੁਨਾਲਾ ਹਮੇਸ਼ਾ ਦੋ ਵੱਖੇ ਵੱਖਰੇ ਕਬੀਲਿਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਬਹੁਤ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਸਮਝਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ "ਪਾਰਸ ਪਰਸ ਹੋਤ ਕਨਿਕ ਅਨੇਕ ਧਾਤ, ਕਨਿਕ ਸੇ ਅਨਿਕ ਨ ਹੋਤ ਗੋਤਾਚਾਰ ਜੀ"। (ਅਨੇਕਾਂ ਵਰਣ, ਗੋਤ ਅਤੇ ਜਾਤਾਂ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਆ ਕੇ ਪਾਰਸ ਬਣ ਜਾਂਦੀਆਂ ਸਨ ਪਰ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਤੋਂ ਅਨੇਕਾਂ ਜਾਤਾਂ ਗੋਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਭੇਦ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਲਪੇ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੇ)। ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਇਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਜਾਤ ਨੀਵੀਂ ਹੈ ਸਗੋਂ ਇਹ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਜਾਤ ਦੇ ਆਧਾਰਤ ਨਫਰਤ ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਨਸਲ ਲਈ ਘਾਤਕ ਹੈ। ਜਿੰਨਾ ਚਿਰ ਜੁੱਤੀਆਂ ਬਣਦੀਆਂ ਰਹਿਣਗੀਆਂ ਚਮਾਰ (ਭਾਵੇਂ ਕੋਈ ਨਾਮ ਰੱਖ ਲਿਆ ਜਾਵੇ) ਵੀ ਰਹਿਣਗੇ। ਪਰ ਚਮਾਰ ਨਾਲ ਕੇਵਲ ਚਮਾਰ ਸਮਝ ਕੇ ਨਫਰਤ ਕਰਨੀ ਗੁਰਮਤ ਵਿੱਚ ਮਨੂ ਹੈ। ਅੱਜ ਸਾਡਾ ਸਮਾਜ ਵੀ ਆਪ ਹੁਦਰਾ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਕਿਸੇ ਗਰੀਬ ਚਮਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਨਫਰਤ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਪਰ "ਬਾਟਾ" ਵਰਗੇ ਮਾਇਆਧਾਰੀ ਚਮਾਰ ਨਾਲ ਬੈਠ ਕੇ ਵੀ ਖਾਣ

ਨੂੰ ਤਿਆਰ ਹੈ। ਗੋਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਜਾਤਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਜੋੜ ਕੇ ਘਿਰਣਾ ਦਾ ਬੀਜ ਬੀਜਿਆਂ ਜਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ।

ਗੁਮਤ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਅਨੇਕਾਂ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਣ ਮਿਲਦੇ ਹਨ ਜਿੱਥੇ ਗੋਤਾਂ ਦੀ ਵਰਤੋਂ ਖੁਲ੍ਹ ਕੇ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ। ਜਨਮ ਸਾਖੀਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ "ਛੀਨਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਕਾ ਸੀਨਾ" ਜਾਂ "ਜਵੰਦਾ ਅਕਲ ਦਾ ਅੰਧਾ" ਵਰਗੇ ਵਾਕ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਮੁਖੋਂ ਅਖਵਾਏ ਮਿਲ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇੱਕ ਪੂਰਾ ਅਧਿਆਇ "ਅਜਿੱਤੇ ਰੰਧਾਵੇ ਨਾਲ ਗੋਸ਼ਟ" ਵੀ ਮਿਲ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਸ਼ਾਇਦ ਕੋਈ ਕਹੇ ਕਿ ਜਨਮ ਸਾਖੀ ਪਰੰਪਰਾ ਕੋਈ ਟਕਸਾਲੀ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਨਹੀਂ। ਅਸੀਂ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਪੰਥ ਦੇ ਪੁਰੰਧਰ ਵਿਦਵਾਨ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਵਾਰਾਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਕੁੱਝ ਟੁਕਾਂ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਕੁੰਜੀ ਸਮਝਿਆਂ ਜਾਦਾ ਹੈ। ਕੁੰਜੀ ਅਤੇ ਜਿੰਦਰੇ ਦਾ ਸਬੰਧ ਅਟੁਟ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ।

ਚਲੀ ਪੀੜੀ ਸੋਢੀਆਂ ਰੂਪ ਦਿਖਾਵਣ ਵਾਰੇ ਵਾਰੀ
ਬੈਠਾ ਸੋਢੀ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹ ਰਾਮ ਦਾਸ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਕਹਾਵੈ
ਜਾਣਿ ਨ ਦੇਸਾਂ ਸੋਢੀਓਂ ਹੋਰਸਿ ਅਜਰ ਨ ਜਰਿਆ ਜਾਈ
ਕਲਿ ਜੁਗਿ ਪੀੜੀ ਸੋਢੀਆਂ ਨਿਹਚਲ ਨੀਵ ਉਸਾਰ ਖਲਾਰੀ
ਸਨਮੁਖਿ ਸਿਖ ਲਹੌਰ ਵਿਚ ਸੋਢੀ ਆਇਣ ਤਾਇਆ ਸੰਹਾਰੀ
ਮਾਧੇ ਸੋਢੀ ਕਾਸ਼ਮੀਰ ਗੁਰਸਿਖੀ ਦੀ ਚਾਲ ਚਲਾਈ
ਸਨਮੁਖੁ ਸੋਢੀ ਬਦਲੀ ਸੇਠ ਗੁਪਾਲੈ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਜਾਣੀ
ਮਲੀਆ ਸਹਾਰੂ ਭੱਲੇ ਛੀਬੈ ਗੁਰ ਦਰਗਹ ਦਰਬਾਰੀ

ਇਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ "ਗੱਜਣ ਉਪਲ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਭਾਵੈ", "ਜਿਤਾ ਰੰਧਾਵਾ ਭਲਾ" ਫਿਰਨਾ ਖਹਿਰਾ ਜੋਧ ਸਿਖ" ਵਰਗੀਆਂ ਅਨੇਕਾਂ ਤੁਕਾਂ ਦਸਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਖੁਲ੍ਹ ਕੇ ਗੋਤਾਂ ਦੀ ਵਰਤੋਂ ਕੀਤੀ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਰਜਨ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਨਹੀਂ ਵਰਜਿਆ।

ਕੁੱਝ ਸੱਜਣ ਸ਼ਾਇਦ ਇਹ ਕਹਿਣ ਕਿ ਕੁਰਹਿਤਾਂ ਦਾ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਵੇਲੇ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਹੋਇਆ ਅਤੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਗੋਤਾਂ ਦੀ ਵਰਤੋਂ ਤੇ ਪਾਬੰਦੀ ਲਾ ਦਿੱਤੀ। ਇਸ ਸ਼ੰਕਾ ਦੀ ਨਵਿਰਤੀ ਬਚਿਤ੍ਰ ਨਾਟਕ (ਜਿਸ ਨੂੰ ਅਜ ਕਲ੍ਹ ਦਸਮ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਕਹਿਣ ਲਗ ਪਏ ਹਨ) ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਸਹਿਜੇ ਹੀ ਹੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ। ਸੋ ਅਸੀਂ ਕੁੱਝ ਟੁਕਾਂ ਹੇਠ ਦੇ ਰਹੇ ਹਾਂ।

ਬੇਦੀ ਭਏ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਨ ਰਾਜ ਕਹਿ ਪਾਇਕੈ
ਦੇਤ ਭਯੋ ਬਰਦਾਨ ਹੀਐ ਉਲਸਾਇਕੈ (124)
ਲਵੀ ਰਾਜ ਦੇ ਬਨ ਗਏ ਬੇਦੀਅਨ ਕੀਨੋ ਰਾਜ (125)
ਤਿਨ ਬੇਦੀਅਨ ਕੀ ਕੁਲ ਬਿਖੇ ਪਰਗਟੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਰਾਏ
ਅਬ ਮੈਂ ਕਹੋ ਸੁ ਅਪਨੀ ਕਥਾ
ਸੋਢੀ ਬੰਸ ਉਪਜਿਆ ਜਥਾ (112)
ਤਿਹ ਤੋ ਪੁਤਰ ਭਯੋ ਜੋ ਧਾਮਾ,
ਸੋਢੀ ਰਾਏ ਧਰਾ ਤਿਹ ਨਾਮਾ (115)
ਤਾਂ ਤੋ ਪੁਤ੍ਰ ਪੌਤ੍ਰ ਹੋਇ ਆਏ,
ਤੇ ਸੋਢੀ ਸਭ ਜਗਤ ਕਹਾਏ (115)
ਜਿਨੈ ਬੋਦ ਪਠਿਓ ਸੁ ਬੇਦੀ ਕਹਾਏ,
ਤਿਨੈ ਧਰਮ ਕੇ ਕਰਮ ਨੀਕੇ ਚਲਾਏ।

ਕੁਝ ਲੋਕ ਸ਼ਾਇਦ ਇਹ ਕਹਿਣ ਕਿ "ਦਸਮ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ" ਵਿਵਾਦ ਵਾਲਾ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਹੈ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਗਿਆਤ ਲਈ ਅਸੀਂ ਜ਼ਫਨਰਨਾਮੇ ਦੀ ਹੇਠਲੀ ਤੁਕ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਾਂ ਜਿੱਥੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਆਪ ਬਰਾੜ ਗੋਤ ਦਾ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ।

**ਨ ਜੱਰਾ ਦਰੀਂ ਰਾਹ ਖ਼ਤਰਾ ਤੁਰਾ ਅਸਤ,
ਹਮਾ ਕੌਮਿ ਬੈਰਾੜ ਹੁਕਮਿ ਮਰਾ ਅਸਤ। (59)**

ਗੁਰਸਿਖੀ ਦਾ ਸੋਮਾਂ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਹਨ ਪਰ ਇੱਥੇ ਵੀ 'ਗੋਤ' ਦੀ ਵਰਤੋਂ ਵਿਰੁਧ ਕੋਈ ਫਤਵਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਸਗੋਂ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਸਤਿਕਾਰ ਨਾਲ ਵਰਤਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਹੇਠਲੀਆਂ ਤੁਕਾਂ ਦੇਖੋ

"ਭਲੇ ਅਮਰਦਾਸ ਗੁਣ ਤੇਰੇ
ਤੇਰੀ ਉਪਮਾ ਤੋਹਿ ਬਨਿ ਆਵੈ (ਪੰਨਾ 1396)
ਲਹਿਣੇ ਪੰਥੁ ਧਰਕ ਕਾ ਕੀਆ
ਅਮਰਦਾਸ ਭਲੇ ਕਉ ਦੀਆ (ਪੰਨਾ 1401)
ਤਿਨਿ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਸੋਢੀ ਥਿਰ ਥਪਉ (1401)
ਸੋਢੀ ਸ੍ਰਿਸਟ ਸਕਲ ਤਾਰਣ ਕਉ
ਅਬ ਗੁਰ ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਕਉ ਮਿਲੀ ਬਡਾਈ (ਪੰਨਾ 1406)
ਕੁਲਿ ਸੋਢੀ ਗੁਰ ਰਾਮਦਾਸ
ਤਨੁ ਧਰਮੁ ਪੁਜਾ ਅਰਜਨੁ ਹਰਿ ਭਗਤਾ (ਪੰਨਾ 1407)

ਗੋਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਜਾਤਾਂ ਆਦਿਕ ਨਾਲ ਜੋੜ ਕੇ ਕਹਿਣਾ ਕਿ ਗੋਤ ਦੀ ਵਰਤੋਂ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਦੇ ਵਿਰੁਧ ਹੈ ਬਿਲਕੁਲ ਮਨ ਮਤ ਹੈ। ਜੇ ਕਰ "ਗੋਤ" ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਦੇ ਵਿਰੁਧ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਤਾਂ ਹੋਰ ਕੁਰੀਤੀਆਂ ਵਾਂਗ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ "ਗੋਤ" ਦੀ ਵਰਤੋਂ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਭੰਡਦੇ ਪਰ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਵਿਚ ਅਤੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਸਿਖ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਵਿੱਚ ਕਿਧਰੇ ਵੀ ਗੋਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਵਿਰੁਧ ਕੁੱਝ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਿਹਾ ਗਿਆ। ਜੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ "ਕੌਮਿ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ" ਦੀ ਥਾਂ "ਕੌਮਿ ਬੈਰਾੜ" ਲਿਖਦੇ ਹਨ ਜਾਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਵਿਚ "ਸੋਢੀ ਪਾਤਸਾਹ" ਪੜ੍ਹਣ ਵੇਲੇ ਖੋਟ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਮਝਦੇ ਤਾਂ "ਅੱਜਲਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ" ਜਾਂ "ਸੋਢੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ" ਕਹਿਣ ਵਿਚ ਕਿਹੜੀ ਖੋਟ ਆ ਗਈ ?

ਗੋਤ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਬਜ਼ੁਰਗਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਕਰਨੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਸੂਰਮਤਾਈਆਂ ਦੀ ਯਾਦ ਕਰਵਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਹ ਗੱਲ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਆਪ ਲਿਖਦੇ ਹਨ "ਬਾਬਾਣੀਆਂ ਕਹਾਣੀਆਂ ਪੁਤ ਸਪੁਤ ਕਰੇਣਿ" (ਪੰਨਾ 951)। ਗੋਤ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਦੀ ਪਛਾਣ ਕਰਵਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਜੱਸਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਤਾਂ ਸ਼ੈਂਕੜੇ ਹੀ ਹੋ ਗੁਜ਼ਰੇ ਹਨ ਪਰ ਜੱਸਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਆਹਲੂਵਾਲੀਆ ਇੱਕੋ ਸੂਰਮਾ ਸੀ। ਇੰਗਲੈਂਡ ਵਰਗੇ ਦੇਸਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਤਾਂ ਫਾਰਮਾਂ ਆਦਿਕ ਵਿੱਚ ਗੋਤ ਲਿਖਣਾ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਈ ਸੰਦੇਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ (ਖਾਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਅਮ੍ਰਿਤਧਾਰੀ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ) ਲਈ ਆਪਣੇ ਨਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਜਾਂ ਕੌਰ ਲਿਖਣਾ ਮਾਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਗਲ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਤਿਆਗਣਾ ਮਨਮਤ ਹੈ। ਪਰ ਗੋਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਜਾਤਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਮਿਲਾਉਣਾ ਹੋਰ ਵੀ ਵੱਡੀ ਮਨਮਤ ਹੈ।

‘ਸਿੱਖ ਫ਼ਲਸਫ਼ੇ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਚਾਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਅਜ਼ਾਦੀ’

ਟਰਾਂਟੋ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਪੰਥ ਡਾਟ ਕਮ ਵੱਲੋਂ ‘ਸਿੱਖ ਫ਼ਲਸਫ਼ੇ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਚਾਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਅਜ਼ਾਦੀ’ ਸਬੰਧੀ ਹੋਏ ਸ਼ਾਨਦਾਰ ਸੈਮੀਨਾਰ ਵਿਚ ਡਾ: ਹਰਜਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਿਲਗੀਰ, ਪ੍ਰੋ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੰਘਾ ਨੇ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਰੱਖੇ

ਟਰਾਂਟੋ - ਬੀਤੇ ਦਿਨ ਏਥੇ ਬਰੈਂਪਟਨ (ਟਰਾਂਟੋ, ਕਨੇਡਾ) ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਪੰਥ ਡਾਟ ਕਮ ਵੱਲੋਂ ‘ਸਿੱਖ ਫ਼ਲਸਫ਼ੇ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਚਾਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਅਜ਼ਾਦੀ’ ਸਬੰਧੀ ਹੋਏ ਸੈਮੀਨਾਰ ਵਿਚ ਡਾ: ਹਰਜਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਿਲਗੀਰ, ਪ੍ਰੋ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਸ ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੰਘਾ ਉਚੇਚੇ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਪੁੱਜੇ ਅਤੇ ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਵਿਚਾਰਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਜਾਣੂੰ ਕਰਵਾਇਆ। ਇਹ ਸਮਾਗਮ ਪਿਛਲੇ ਸਾਲ 2 ਅਪਰੈਲ ਦੇ ਦਿਨ ਪ੍ਰੋ. ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਕੀਰਤਨ ਸਮੇਂ ਦਸਮ ਗ੍ਰੰਥੀਆਂ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਕੀਤੇ ਗਏ ਹਮਲੇ ਦੀ ਯਾਦ ਵਿਚ ਰੱਖਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ। ਸਮਾਗਮ ਵਿਚ ਬੋਲਦਿਆਂ ਮਹਾਨ ਕੀਰਤਨੀਏ ਪ੍ਰੋ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੇ ਘਰ ਤੇ ਹਮਲਾ ਕਰਨਾ ਜਾਂ ਕੀਰਤਨ ਰੋਕਣਾ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ ‘ਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਹਮਲਾ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ। ਡਾ ਦਿਲਗੀਰ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਯੂ.ਐਨ.ਓ. ਨੇ ਤਾਂ ਆਪਣਾ ਮੈਨੀਫ਼ੈਸਟੋ ਬਣਾ ਲਿਆ ਪਰ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਦੇ ਆਗੂ ਅਖਵਾਉਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਨੂੰ ਪਿੱਠ ਦੇ ਕੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੇ ਦੁਆਰੇ ਤੇ ਹਮਲਾਵਰ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਦਸਮਗ੍ਰੰਥੀ ਟੋਲਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਬੇਅਦਬੀ ਦੇ ਖਿਲਾਫ ਮੁਜ਼ਾਹਰਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦਾ ਬਲਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਸਰਬੱਚਤਾ ਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਤੇ ਹਮਲਾਵਰ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਵਿਚ ਤਾਂ ‘ਰੋਸ ਨਾ ਕੀਜੈ ਉਤਰ ਦੀਜੈ’ ਦਾ ਪੈਗਾਮ ਹੈ, ਮਿਠਤ ਨੀਵੀਂ ਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਦਸਮ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਨੂੰ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਸਾਕਤ ਮੱਤ ਦੀ ਸੀਖਿਆ ਹਾਸਲ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਇਸੇ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਉਹ ਸਾਰੀਆਂ ਕਾਰਵਾਈਆਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਉਲਟ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਕਨੇਡਾ ਦੀਆਂ ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਹਰ ਸਾਲ ਇਸ ਦਿਨ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਮਰਿਆਦਾ ਕਾਇਮ ਰੱਖਣ ਦੇ ਦਿਨ ਵਜੋਂ ਮਨਾਉਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ। ਸ ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੰਘਾ ਕਿਚਨਰ ਨੇ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਸੰਸਥਾ ਦੇ ਫ਼ਲਸਫ਼ੇ ਅਤੇ ‘ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ’ ਦੇ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਬਾਰੇ ਵਿਦਵਤਾ ਭਰਪੂਰ ਚਾਣਨਾ ਪਾਇਆ; ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਕਿ ਖੰਡੇ ਦੀ ਪਾਹੁਲ ਅਤੇ ‘ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ’ ਵਿਚ ਅਸਲ ਫ਼ਰਕ ਕੀ ਹੈ।

ਇਸ ਸਮਾਗਮ ਵਿਚ ਦੇ ਅਖੀਰ ਵਿਚ ਪ੍ਰੋ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਸਿੰਘ, ਡਾ ਹਰਜਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਿਲਗੀਰ, ਡਾ ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੰਘਾ, ਸ ਗੁਰਚਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਜਿਉਣਵਾਲਾ (ਸਿੰਘ ਸਭਾ ਕਨੇਡਾ), ਮੱਖਣ ਸਮਰਾ (ਰੋਣਕ ਮੇਲਾ ਰੇਡੀਓ), ਪ੍ਰਿੰਸੀਪਲ ਧਾਲੀਵਾਲ ਨੂੰ ਸਿਰੋਪਾਓ ਭੇਟ ਕੀਤੇ ਗਏ। ਇਸ ਮੌਕੇ ‘ਤੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਪੰਥ ਡਾਟ ਕਮ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕਾਰ ਡਾ ਹਰਜਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਿਲਗੀਰ ਨੂੰ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਸਬੰਧੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਬਦਲੇ ‘ਗੋਲਡ ਮੈਡਲ’ ਵੀ ਭੇਟ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ। ਇਸ ਸਮਾਗਮ ਵਿਚ ਡਾ ਦਿਲਗੀਰ, ਸ ਰਘਬੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਮੇਘ (ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਟੀ.ਵੀ), ਸ ਮਨਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਰੋਤਾ, ਸ. ਪਰਮਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਪਰਮਾਰ, ਸ. ਮਨਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਮਾਂਗਟ ਨੇ ਦੋ ਕਿਤਾਬਾਂ ਵੀ ਰਲੀਜ਼ ਕੀਤੀਆਂ। ਸਮਾਗਮ ਵਿਚ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਇਲਾਵਾ ਸ ਸਤਵਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਰਾਣਾ, ਸ ਰੋਸ਼ਮ ਸਿੰਘ, ਸ ਹਰਜਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ਸ. ਗੁਰਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੋਬਰਿਜ, ਸ ਤਰਨਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ, ਸ ਅਵਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ਸ ਦਲਵਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਵੀ ਹਾਜ਼ਰ ਸਨ। ਸਟੇਜ ਸਕੱਤਰ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਸ ਗੁਰਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਬਖ਼ੂਬੀ ਨਿਭਾਈ। ਇਸ ਮੌਕੇ ਤੇ ਦੂਰ ਦੂਰ ਤੋਂ

ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਪੱਜੀਆਂ ਹੋਈਆਂ ਸਨ; ਇਸ ਮੌਕੇ ਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਸਬੰਧੀ ਕਿਤਾਬਾਂ ਦਾ ਸਟਾਲ ਵੀ ਲਾਇਆ ਗਿਆ ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਭੇਟਾ ਰਹਿਤ ਬਹੁਤ ਸਾਰੀਆਂ ਕਿਤਾਬਾਂ ਵੀ ਦਿੱਤੀਆਂ ਗਈਆਂ।

ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਹਥਿਆਰ ਨਹੀਂ

“ਸਿੱਖ ਕੌਂਸਲ ਆਫ ਆਸਟ੍ਰੇਲੀਆ” ਦੇ ਯਤਨਾਂ ਸਦਕਾ ਆਸਟ੍ਰੇਲੀਅਨ ਕਸਟਮ ਵਿਭਾਗ ਹੁਣ ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਨੂੰ ਹਥਿਆਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਹੇਗਾ

ਸਿਡਨੀ (ਅਮਰਜੀਤ ਖੇਲਾ, ਬਲਜੀਤ ਖੇਲਾ) ਆਸਟ੍ਰੇਲੀਆ ਦੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਪੁਰਾਣੀ ਤੇ ਵੱਡੀ ਸੰਸਥਾ “ਸਿੱਖ ਕੌਂਸਲ ਆਫ ਆਸਟ੍ਰੇਲੀਆ” ਦੇ ਯਤਨਾਂ ਸਦਕਾ ਆਸਟ੍ਰੇਲੀਅਨ ਕਸਟਮ ਵਿਭਾਗ ਹੁਣ ਆਸਟ੍ਰੇਲੀਆ ਆਉਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਜਾਂ ਆਸਟ੍ਰੇਲੀਆ ਤੋਂ ਜਾਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਕਿਰਪਾਨਧਾਰੀ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਨੂੰ ਹਥਿਆਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਮਝੇਗਾ। ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਨਿਧ ਨੂੰ ਆਸਟ੍ਰੇਲੀਅਨ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਦੇ ਘਰੇਲੂ ਮਸਲਿਆਂ ਤੇ ਨਿਆਂ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਬਰੈਂਡਨ ਓ ਕੋਰਨਰ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਲਿਖਤੀ ਰੂਪ ‘ਚ ਭੇਜਿਆ ਪੱਤਰ ਦਿਖਾਉਂਦੇ ਹੋਏ “ਸਿੱਖ ਕੌਂਸਲ ਆਫ ਆਸਟ੍ਰੇਲੀਆ” ਦੇ ਸਕੱਤਰ ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਬਾਵਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਜਗਦੇਵ ਨੇ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਨਾਲ ਹੁਣ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਚਿੰਨ੍ਹ ਨੂੰ ਹਥਿਆਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਮਝਿਆ ਜਾਵੇਗਾ। ਜਿਕਰਯੋਗ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਕੁੱਝ ਸਮਾਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਇੱਕ ਸਿੰਘ ਪਰਮਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੀ ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਬ੍ਰਿਸਬੇਨ ਦੇ ਅੰਤਰਰਾਸ਼ਟਰੀ ਏਅਰਪੋਰਟ ਤੇ ਕਸਟਮ ਅਧਿਕਾਰੀਆਂ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਹਥਿਆਰ ਸਮਝ ਕੇ ਰੱਖ ਲੈਣ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਜਗਦੇਵ ਨੇ ਇਹ ਮੁੱਦਾ “ਸਿੱਖ ਕੌਂਸਲ ਆਫ ਆਸਟ੍ਰੇਲੀਆ” ਵੱਲੋਂ ਆਸਟ੍ਰੇਲੀਅਨ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਕੋਲ ਉਠਾਉਣ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਕਿ ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਚਿੰਨ੍ਹ ਹੈ ਨਾ ਕਿ ਹਥਿਆਰ ਇਹ ਫੈਸਲਾ ਲਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਪੱਤਰ ‘ਚ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਨੇ ਇਹ ਵੀ ਸਪੱਸ਼ਟ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸ. ਪਰਮਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੀ ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਜੋ ਅਫਸਰਾਂ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਰੱਖ ਲਈ ਗਈ ਸੀ ਉਹ ਪਰਮਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਵਾਪਿਸ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਜਾਵੇਗੀ। ਇਸਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਨੇ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਆਸਟ੍ਰੇਲੀਅਨ ਕਸਟਮ ਵਿਭਾਗ ਦੇ ਕਰਮਚਾਰੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਟ੍ਰੇਨਿੰਗ ਦੌਰਾਨ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਜਾਵੇਗਾ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਨੌਕਰੀ ਦੌਰਾਨ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਨਾਲ ਭੇਦਭਿੰਨ ਦੀ ਵਰਤੋਂ ਨਾ ਕਰਨ, ਪ੍ਰੰਤੂ ਜੇਕਰ ਫਿਰ ਵੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਲੱਗਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਕਿਸੇ ਕਰਮਚਾਰੀ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਉਸਦੇ ਧਰਮ, ਨਸਲ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਕਾਰਨ ਵਿਤਕਰਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਇਸ ਵਾਰੇ ਸ਼ਿਕਾਇਤ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ ਤੇ ਇਸ ਮਾਮਲੇ ‘ਚ ਜੇਕਰ ਕੋਈ ਵੀ ਦੋਸ਼ੀ ਪਾਇਆ ਜਾਵੇਗਾ ਤਾਂ ਬਣਦੀ ਕਾਰਵਾਈ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾਵੇਗੀ। ਅਖੀਰ ‘ਚ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਨੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਕੌਂਸਲ ਆਸਟ੍ਰੇਲੀਆ ਦਾ ਇਹ ਮੁੱਦਾ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਧਿਆਨ ‘ਚ ਲਿਆਉਣ ਲਈ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਧੰਨਵਾਦ ਕੀਤਾ ਤਾਂ ਜੋ ਕਸਟਮ ਵਿਭਾਗ ਭਵਿੱਖ ‘ਚ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਬੰਧਿਤ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਭਾਵਨਾਵਾਂ ਦਾ ਜਿਆਦਾ ਤੋਂ ਜਿਆਦਾ ਖਿਆਲ ਰੱਖ ਸਕਣ। ਸਿੱਖ ਕੌਂਸਲ ਆਸਟ੍ਰੇਲੀਆ ਦੇ ਸਕੱਤਰ ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਬਾਵਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਜਗਦੇਵ ਨੇ ਸਮੂਹ ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਧਾਰੀ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਬੇਨਤੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਕਿ ਜੇਕਰ ਹੋ ਸਕੇ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਇਸ ਪੱਤਰ ਦੀ ਕਾਪੀ ਆਪਣੇ ਨਾਲ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਹਵਾਈ ਜਹਾਜ਼ ਦਾ ਸਫਰ ਕਰਨ ਤਾਂ ਜੋ ਲੋੜ ਪੈਣ ਤੇ ਇਸ ਕਸਟਮ ਅਧਿਕਾਰੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਦਿਖਾਈ ਜਾ ਸਕੇ। ਇਸ ਪੱਤਰ ਦੀ ਕਾਪੀ ਲੈਣ ਲਈ ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਜਗਦੇਵ ਨਾਲ secretary@sikhcouncil.org.au ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ।

ਪਿਆਰੇ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜੀਓ! ਆਪਣਾ ਆਪਣਾ ਪਿੰਡ ਸੰਭਾਲੋ।

2004 ਵਿਚ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਭਾ ਇੰਟਰਨੈਸ਼ਨਲ ਕੈਨੇਡਾ ਓਨਟਾਰੀਓ ਵਿਚ ਹੋਂਦ ਵਿਚ ਆਈ ਅਤੇ ਬੜੀ ਮਿਹਨਤ ਕਰਨ ਦੇ ਬਾਅਦ 2006 ਵਿਚ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਚੈਰਿਟੀ ਨੰਬਰ ਵੀ ਮਿਲ ਗਿਆ। ਅੱਜ ਇਸ ਹਰਮਨ ਪਿਆਰੀ ਸੰਸਥਾ ਦੇ ਚੈਪਟਰ ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਭਰ ਵਿਚ ਫੈਲ ਚੁਕੇ ਹਨ ਜਿਵੇਂ:- ਸਕਾਰਬਰੋ, ਵਿਨੀਪਿਗ, ਵੈਨਕੂਵਰ, ਕੈਲਗਿਰੀ, ਐਡਮੋਨਟਨ, ਕੈਲੇਫੋਰਨੀਆ, ਸਵਿਟਜ਼ਰਲੈਂਡ, ਜਰਮਨੀ, ਇਟਲੀ, ਬੈਲਜੀਅਮ, ਫਿਨਲੈਂਡ, ਨਾਰਵੇ, ਅਸਟਰੇਲੀਆ, ਨਿਊਜ਼ੀਲੈਂਡ ਆਦਿ। ਇਹ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਭਾ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਗਿਆਨ ਮਿਸ਼ਨਰੀ ਕਾਲਜ ਲੁਧਿਆਣਾ ਨਾਲ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਭਰ ਵਿਚ ਕੰਮ ਕਰ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਪਿਛਲੇ ਚਾਰ ਸਾਲਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਇਕ ਲੱਖ ਸੀ. ਡੀਜ਼ ਅਤੇ ਵੀਡੀਓਜ਼ ਬਣਾ ਕੇ ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਭਰ ਵਿਚ ਵੰਡ ਚੁਕੀ ਹੈ। ਹੁਣ ਤਕ ਤਕਰੀਬਨ ਦੋ ਲੱਖ ਡਾਲਰ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਲਈ, ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰਕਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਤਨਖਾਹਾਂ, ਲੈਪਟੋਪ, ਪਰੋਜੈਕਟਰਾਂ ਤੇ ਮੋਟਰਸਾਈਕਲਾਂ ਤੇ ਖਰਚ ਕਰ ਚੁੱਕੀ ਹੈ। ਸ਼੍ਰੋ.ਗੁ.ਪ੍ਰ. ਕਮੇਟੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਦਾ ਬਜਟ 5 ਅਰਬ ਦਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਸਾਡਾ ਕੋਈ ਬਜਟ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ। ਇਸ ਦੇ ਬਾਵਜੂਦ ਵੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਭਾ ਇੰਟਰਨੈਸ਼ਨਲ ਕੈਨੇਡਾ ਆਪਣੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਸਹਿਮਤੀ ਵਾਲੇ ਚੈਪਟਰਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਮਿਲ ਕੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ 66 ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰਕ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਲਈ ਨਿਯੁਕਤ ਕਰ ਚੁੱਕੀ ਹੈ ਜਦੋਂ ਕਿ ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਦੇ 65 ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰਕ ਧਰਮ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਲਈ ਛੱਡੇ ਹੋਏ ਹਨ ਜੋ ਤਨਖਾਹਾਂ ਤਾਂ ਲੈਂਦੇ ਹਨ ਪਰ ਕੰਮ ਕਰਦੇ ਕਿਤੇ ਵਖਾਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਦਿੰਦੇ।

2011 ਵਿਚ ਇਹ ਸੰਸਥਾ ਨੀਚੇ ਵਰਨਣ ਕੀਤੇ ਕਾਰਜਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਨੇਪਰੇ ਚਾੜ੍ਹਨ ਦੀ ਤਿਆਰੀ ਕਰ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ:

ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿਚ ਝੋਨਾ ਲਾਉਣ ਆਏ ਬਿਹਾਰੀ ਇਨਸਾਨ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਤੋਂ ਪ੍ਰਭਾਵਤ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਜਦੋਂ ਵਾਪਸ ਮੁੜ ਕੇ ਬਿਹਾਰ ਵਿਚ ਗਏ ਤਾਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਕੁਝ ਗੁਰਦਵਾਰੇ ਬਣਾਏ ਪਰ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰਕ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਕੋਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਕਿ ਕੋਈ ਬਾਬਾ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਜਾ ਠੱਗੇ, ਸਿੰਘ ਸਭਾ ਆਪਣੇ ਖਰਚੇ ਤੇ ਘੱਟ ਤੋਂ ਘੱਟ ਦੋ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰਕ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਸਮਝਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਭੇਜਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ।

ਅਗਸਤ/ਸਤੰਬਰ 2010 ਵਿਚ 16 ਹਜ਼ਾਰ ਸੀ.ਡੀ ਅਤੇ ਡੀ.ਵੀ.ਡੀਜ਼ ਬਣਾ ਕੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਤੇ ਨਾਲ ਦੇ ਸੂਬਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਤਜਰਬੇ ਦੇ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਵੰਡੀਆਂ ਗਈਆਂ। ਜਿਸ ਦੇ ਨਤੀਜੇ ਨੂੰ ਦੇਖਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਹੁਣ ਇਹ ਸੰਸਥਾ ਇਕ ਲੱਖ ਸੀ.ਡੀ ਅਤੇ ਡੀ.ਵੀ.ਡੀਜ਼ ਬਣਾ ਕੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਤੇ ਨਾਲ ਦੇ ਸੂਬਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਅਤੇ ਬਾਹਰਲੇ ਮੁਲਕਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੰਡਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ।

ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਚੰਗੀ ਸਿਹਤ ਨੂੰ ਮੱਦੇ ਨਜ਼ਰ ਰੱਖਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਭਾ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਗਿਆਨ ਮਿਸ਼ਨਰੀ ਕਾਲਜ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਲਈ ਇਕ ਅਧੁਨਿਕ ਕਿਸਮ ਦਾ ਜ਼ਿਮ ਤਿਆਰ ਕਰਕੇ ਦੇਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ।

ਅਗਸਤ 2011 ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਭਾ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕੀਤੇ ਹੋਏ ਅਤੇ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕਰਨ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਕਾਰਜਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਭਰ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਸਹਿਮਤ ਸੱਜਣਾਂ ਦੀ ਇਕ ਕਾਨਫਰਾਂਸ ਵੈਨਕੂਵਰ ਵਿਚ ਕਰਨਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ।

ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਕਾਰਜਾਂ ਲਈ ਮਾਇਆ ਦੀ ਅਤੇ ਸਾਥ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਲਹਿਰ ਨਿਰੋਲ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਵਿਚਾਰਧਾਰਾ ਨੂੰ ਸਮੁੱਧਤਿ ਹੈ। ਆਓ ਇਸ ਲਹਿਰ ਨੂੰ ਕਾਮਯਾਬ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਇਸ ਦਾ ਹਿਸਾ ਬਣੀਏ।

ਹੋਰ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਲਈ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਭਾ ਦੇ ਮੈਂਬਰਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ ਜੀ।

ਸ਼੍ਰੋ. ਅਮਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਗਿਆਨ ਮਿਸ਼ਨਰੀ ਕਾਲਜ ਲੁਧਿਆਣਾ, ਸੈਂਟਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਇੰਨਚਾਰਜ:

ਮੋਬਾਈਲ # 98141 24242

ਸ਼੍ਰੋ. ਬਲਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਿਨੀਪਿਗ। ਨੰਬਰ 204 880 3304

ਸ਼੍ਰੋ. ਸੁਰਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਕਲੋਨੇ ਬੀ.ਸੀ. 250 808 7447

ਸ਼੍ਰੋ. ਅਮਰਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਿਕਟੋਰੀਆ ਬੀ.ਸੀ. 250 727 2758

ਸ਼੍ਰੋ. ਹਰਚਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਿੱਖ ਵਿਰਸਾ ਕੈਲਗਿਰੀ। ਨੰਬਰ: 403 681 8689

ਸ਼੍ਰੋ. ਪਰਮਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਪਰਮਾਰ ਮਿਸੀਸਾਗਾ। ਨੰਬਰ # 905 858 8904

ਸ਼੍ਰੋ. ਹਰਬੰਸ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੰਧੋਲਾ ਵੈਨਕੂਵਰ। ਮੋਬਾਈਲ # 604 839 1308

ਸ਼੍ਰੋ. ਪਰਮਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਮੱਲੀ ਵੈਨਕੂਵਰ। ਮੋਬਾਈਲ # 778 552 5861

ਸ਼੍ਰੋ. ਗੁਰਚਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਜਿਉਣਵਾਲਾ ਟੋਰਾਂਟੋ। ਘਰ # 905 454 4741

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